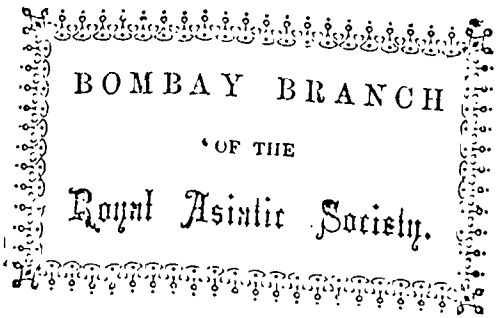
00094593



Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 06 February, 2016

THE

REMAINS

OF

ROBERT BLOOMFIELD.

THE

REMAINS

OF

ROBERT BLOOMFIELD,

AUTHOR OF THE FARMER'S BOY,
RURAL TALES, &c.

94593

How does the lustre of our father's virtues
(Through the dark cloud of ills that cover him)
Break out, and burn with more transcendent brightness!

CATO.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

LONDON:

PRINTED BY THOMAS DAVISON, WHITEFRIARS,
FOR THE EXCLUSIVE BENEFIT OF THE FAMILY
OF MR. BLOOMFIELD;
AND PUBLISHED BY
BALDWIN, CRADOCK, AND JOY.

1824.

GON
551.7
Bibl.
94593

CONTENTS

OF

VOL. II.

	Page
JOURNAL OF A TOUR DOWN THE RIVER WYE	1
ANECDOTES AND OBSERVATIONS	49
REFLECTIONS	97
CRITICAL	107
BIRD AND INSECTS' POST-OFFICE	123
I. From the Magpie to the Sparrow	129
II. The Sparrow's Reply	131
III. From a young Garden Spider to her Mother	133
IV. From a young Nightingale to a Wren	135
V. From an Earwig, deploring the loss of all her children	139
VI. From the Wild Duck to the Tame Duck	142
VII. The Tame Duck's Reply	145
VIII. From the Gander to the Turkey-cock	148

Page

IX. The Dunghill Cock to the Chaffinch 150
X. The Blue-bottle Fly to the Grass-hopper 151
XI. The Glow-worm to the Humble-bee 153
XII. From the Pigeon to the Partridge . 156
XIII. The Wood-pigeon to the Owl . 160
XIV. The Owl in reply to the Wood-pigeon 162
XV. From a Swallow in the South of France to an English Robin . . 165
On hearing the Cuckoo at Midnight, May 1st, 1822, by Mr. Chas. Bloomfield . 167

APPENDIX.

Miss Bloomfield to Mr. Weston . . 176
Mr. Weston to Miss Bloomfield . . 177
Miss Weston to Miss Bloomfield . . 178
Miss Bloomfield to Miss Weston . . 179
Miss Weston to Miss Bloomfield . . 181
Mr. Weston to Miss Bloomfield . . 182
Miss Bloomfield to Mr. Weston . . 185
Mr. Weston to Miss Bloomfield . . 187
Mr. Weston to Mr. Baldwin . . 189
Mr. Baldwin to Mr. Weston . . 191
Miss Bloomfield to Mr. C. Bloomfield . 192
Mr. Weston to Mr. G. Bloomfield . . 195
Mr. George Bloomfield to Mr. Weston . 198
Mr. Weston to Mr. George Bloomfield . 203

Page

Mr. George Bloomfield to Mr. Weston . 204
Mr. Weston to Mr. Inskip . . 205
Mr. Park to Mr. Weston . . . 206
Mr. Inskip to Mr. Weston . . 209
From a Lady to Miss Bloomfield . . 210
Miss Bloomfield in reply . . 211
To the Reader 214

ERRATA.

Page 113, line 17, *insert in blank* 100.
—— 155, line 2, *for* we'll, *read* we will.
—— 174, line 20, *for* estate, *read* dwelling.

JOURNAL

OF A

TOUR DOWN THE RIVER WYE.

JOURNAL

OF A

TOUR DOWN THE RIVER WYE.

ULEY is situated in rather a singular valley, about seven miles from the Severn. It appears to be surrounded by abrupt and woody hills, except on the north; where a bold promontory, with an old camp on its brow, called the "Bury," lifts its bald head, and whose sides, yielding plenty of stone for building, are extremely steep. Yet they are not hills, but merely the terminations of the upland country of Gloucestershire, termed the "Cotswold Levels;"

and here they break suddenly into the vale of the Severn: and the valley of Uley is sunk, so as to be approached by a stranger without the smallest suspicion of there being a valley before him. Cotswold is an immense Gloucester cheese, and Uley Valley is a half-pound notch cut in his side.

The town of Dursley lies in the opening of the same valley, towards the Severn, and immediately under Stinchcomb Hill, one of the most remarkable of these bluff points, as standing majestically forward into the vale of Severn, and consequently commanding a very extensive view in all directions, particularly down the stream, over King-wood, Bristol, the mouth of the Wye, the Monmouthshire and Black Mountains, the Forest of Dean, May Hill, Malvern Hills in Worcestershire, and the city of Gloucester, &c. Both Dursley and Uley are employed in the manufacture of broad-cloth, and was I to abuse their steam-engines, that fill so delightful a valley with smoke, they would probably begin remind-

ing me of my coat, and not unlikely of the time when I was hampered to get one!

The village of Owlpen stands under the hanging woods at the top of Uley Vale; it is very small, and near its curious and obscure church runs the little rill *, with several natural cascades (the first I had ever seen), which, in its further progress, becomes of such importance to the clothiers. The Curate of Uley preaches here once a fortnight, and he lately ran the hazard of his life by the falling of the sounding-board, which struck him a violent blow on the head. The country immediately round this valley on the high ground, is every where intersected by stone walls; for stone, a brick thickness, more or less, is the invariable consequence of digging ten inches into the ground; they are merely piled, without mortar, easily made, and as easily mended:

* At Dursley is a spring near the course of this stream, which turns a mill at the distance of fifty yards from its issuing from the ground.

a strange desolate appearance! In the valley there is no such thing, the verdure is of the most vivid green, and the uneven boundary of woods on the almost perpendicular sides of the high grounds, form the finest amphitheatre I have ever seen; but hold! I am going down the Wye.

Berkley Castle, distant five miles, lies in sight from the heights; but I cannot reach it at present in any of my expeditions, but have frequently thought of Gray and the

"Shrieks of an agonizing King."

From Dursley * to the Severn side at Framelode, the lowlands fall with a slow, gradual descent. The passage-house is finely situated, and the boats are fitted up for the conveying horses and carriages across the stream. The water of the Severn is here but narrow, but owing to the occasional tides of uncommon height, the sands

* Left Dursley at ten in the morning, August 17th.

are extensive. The current is rapid. Barrow Hill is a charming spot, rising in the neck of a horseshoe formed by the Severn, and giving a great command of the country. Here we found plentifully the petrified shell of the Nautilus; and pebbles, which in the neighbourhood of Uley are not seen, nor the least appearance of chalk or flint. Horses, I observed, appear to be struck with a kind of tremulous submission on finding themselves floating; one barge carried the seven; but to float each sociable, two barges were lashed side by side, and the carriage placed across upon planks. One boat of course carried all the party; and we were soon all on terra-firma again, and climbing the high ground, leaving May Hill on our right, passed Flaxley Abbey, the seat of Sir Thomas Crawley. The woods on this estate are chiefly oak, of good growth, and covering the side hills in a manner truly sublime.

The road leads on by Gun's Mills, and to Mitchel Dean, situated in a most beauti-

ful country, and whose church has a spire of uncommon height; and so slender as to make one tremble for the builder. Yet on entering the place, it keeps no promises made at a distance, but is the oldest town (in appearance) that can be imagined; singularly unpleasing to the eye. Here I observed a stone cross, almost perfect, having an upright stone, on which an image was formerly placed.

During the ride from hence to Ross, had two or three peeps at the Malvern Hills, in Worcestershire, and the "Skirit" and "Sugar-loaf" in Monmouthshire.

"Bailey's Side" is a fine bold eminence on the left, clothed with wood, with a range or stratum of rock breaking through it, and forming a curious contrast with the green, above and below. Penyard Hill, in the neighbourhood of Ross, is nearly of the same description, but is on every side covered with steep woods, so that they assert, that no sparrows were ever known on the farm on its brow; this I think possible, as the

sparrow is so entirely domestic, and avoids woods in general; and in this case, his flight would be unusually long, and almost perpendicular.

Arrived at Ross at seven in the evening. Ross is not a town to my fancy, in appearance; perhaps it is the prevalence of rock, and of rock-stone, in their buildings, that gives it a kind of dreary look, to one unused to such buildings. The church, with its taper spire, stands on elevated ground, and from it is a view of the river Wye, winding eel-fashion, below; many of the elms planted by "Kyrle," Pope's "Man of Ross," are growing in the churchyard and neighbourhood. The ruins of Wilton Castle are seen across the stream in the opposite meadows; and a man in the churchyard very seriously informed us, that "the said castle was knocked down by *cannon* in a great rebellion in the time of the *Romans!*"

During my short stay at Ross, I called on

an old acquaintance and fellow-tradesman, whom I had not seen for eleven years; he keeps a shoemaker's shop, opposite the Swan Inn, where we lodged. Left Ross at eight in the morning, 18th.

Assembled to the number of ten on board a pleasure-boat, stored with provisions, and bottles, &c. &c.; the sociables having been ordered forward to meet us at Monmouth and Chepstow *. But how shall I attempt to describe the natural beauties of this charming river, or the objects seen during the passage? I must not attempt it: a journal is not a vehicle of sufficient importance. My heart is brimful of indescribable pleasure when I think on this day. Beauty in all its variety is perhaps its leading feature; but sublimity is paramount to all considerations at the

* Spent an hour on shore at Goodrich Castle. Pollett, the boat-man, informed me that he had often bought good cider for sixpence per gallon, and expected it as cheap this season.

passage under Coldwell rocks *, and round to

* "Hail! Coldwell rocks; frown, frown away;
Thrust from your woods your shafts of grey:
Fall not, to crush our mortal pride,
Or stop the stream on which we glide.
Our lives are short, our joys are few:
But, giants, what is time to you?
Ye who erect, in many a mass,
Rise from the scarcely dimpled glass,
That with distinct and mellow glow
Reflects your monstrous forms below;
Or in clear shoals, in breeze or sun,
Shakes all your shadows into one;
Boast ye o'er man in proud disdain,
A silent, everlasting reign?
Bear ye your heads so high in scorn
Of *names* that puny man hath borne?
Proud rocks! had Cambria's bards but here
Their names engraven, deep and clear,
That such as gaily wind along
Might greet with shouts those sires of song,
And trace the fame that mortals crave
To Light and Life beyond the grave!
Then might ye boast your *wreaths* entwined
With trophies of the deathless Mind;
Then would your fronts record on high,
"*We* perish!—MAN can never die!"

The Banks of Wye.

New Weir and Great Doward, and thence on to Monmouth. Every body knows that the Wye is exceedingly deep in places, and falls beautifully in others over ledges of rocks, so as to form, not cascades, but rapids, where the water hurries along with a *visible* descent; it is winding in its course to a great degree, inconceivably pellucid; and in general, the hills rise majestically steep from its shores.

We dined on board the boat, on the right bank of the stream, near the spring called Coldwell; and here is a new-erected monument in memory of a youth drowned here, in sight of his parents. The inscription is long and excellent *. Permission for its erection was granted by Mr. Vaughan of Monmouth, the owner of the land; and though, for several reasons, I could individually wish the monument *not there*, I think it does honour to him to grant it. And though, as "the Lord of Courtfield," I have condemned

* See Banks of Wye, page 22.

his *taste*, I know nothing disrespectful of his heart.

Coldwell rocks, on the Gloucester side of the stream, are particularly grand and impressive; and the circumstance of having one of them baptized with *my name*, by the company, was agreeable to me.

At the neck of a long horseshoe formed by this river, the rocky eminence called "Symmons' Yat" obtrudes itself to a vast height, between the two points of the approach of the river. Instead of going round with the boat, it is usual for the party to ascend the rocks (where a ridge terminates in a high bank of perpendicular rock, not more than twenty yards wide), and to join the boat again at New Wier. An old woman was our guide, who led us over this isthmus, until our bones ached.—Three of us outstripped our companions; and finding they did not overtake us, I again left my two companions and climbed the pathless way, with intent to reach the summit, which I had missed. On nearly

approaching the absolute perpendicular part of the cliff, I heard voices at the top, and hallooed and soon found that the hindmost part of the company, had climbed the place before me. The old woman descended to become my pilot, and the view paid amply for the labour. On the down-stream side of this bank of rock lies the place called the "New Wier," or a kind of artificial means of keeping up the river, and accommodated by a lock. Here we embarked again, and looked back on the scene with increased interest: for here, projecting from the usual run of this rocky hill, stands, almost detached, an upright tower of stone, very aptly termed the Cathedral, or the "Minster Rock,"—I forget which. It is square and grotesque, and vast in its proportions.

It was one of those charming days that gratify us with their serenity and peace: the clarionet sounded softly; yet the echo was perhaps the more enchanting. To describe all the beauties of the passage was not my intention, was I ever so capable.

There was one circumstance, however, which was to me curious. I had heard when at Ross, that the fishermen on this river, still used the identical kind of boat, which Cæsar has described in his Commentaries, as being used in his time by the natives of Britain; and I hoped for an opportunity of being convinced of its truth. When drawing near to Monmouth, after passing Great Doward, and drinking at Martin's well, we came among some fishermen, who were disturbing the water with long poles to dislodge the salmon. To accomplish this, they occasionally used an infant kind of boat, which they carry with them in their large one; it holds but one person; is, as far as I can guess, not more than four feet in length; goes with the broadest end foremost; is worked by a paddle; has no keel or rudder; and is formed of wickers only, and covered by an oil-skin outside to repel the water. The man paddles himself on shore, jumps out, and takes his boat at his back with great ease. It had a strange and even

laughable appearance; it was impossible to keep the mind at home; it would compare infancy with maturity, a "Corricle"* with the "Victory," and a Wye fisherman to Nelson.

After an uninterrupted day of rational enjoyment, we reached Monmouth, at half-past seven in the evening; eleven hours and a half on the water.

Monmouth (as the birthplace of Henry V.) may be considered as a high curiosity to the antiquarian; but as we were obliged, on account of meeting the tide in our way to Chepstow, to start at six the following morning, no great attention could be paid to the town. The place of his birth, the castle, is nearly all demolished. They have a noble statue of him over the market-house.

Left Monmouth at six in the morning, 19th.—The sun strove to overlook the steeps of wood that enclosed us in, skirting

* Or Corracal.

our misty and delightfully indistinct passage down the river. The day rose; the mists dispersed, and we met the tide just before we reached the village of Landauga, where the cottages rise one over the other, in a manner particularly pleasing, against the morning sun. The reach of the river, that commands the village of Landauga, exemplified in a striking manner that peculiar appearance, which we had noticed often on the water this morning, and the preceding day, viz. where the water was bounded by high ground, and at the same time *seemingly terminated* by as high or higher, it appeared to decline from the eye, and to lose its natural horizontal level, by running extremely down hill into the opposing eminence. We know that a river has in reality its natural declension; but this is a very strong and decided optical deception, and it pleased me not a little.

Through the long reach below Ethelswier, the water became turbid and sluggish, until the tide turned, and then it ran furi-

ously down, and soon brought us in sight of the ruins of Tintern Abbey; a place so often described by pen and by pencil, that I will not attempt it; only remarking that it must have been a place of extreme beauty, and is now an object that strikes the eye, and fixes on the soul something like the shackles of superstition. Yet I would hope that reverence for an old place of devotion, is something deserving a better name. The door was opened suddenly; and the effect instantaneously overpowered us all, in different ways; it is grandeur in a place where it is least expected; a memorial (of wealth and population) now unseen in its neighbourhood; the burial-place of Strongbow, the conqueror of Ireland, &c. Most of the party sat down and took sketches of the interior; but I found it above my reach, and so gave vent to my feelings by singing for their amusement and my own the 104th Psalm: and though no "fretted vault" remains to harmonize the sound, it soothed me into that state of mind which is most to

be desired. We tarried here until the last minute of our allowance of time; the tide was ebbing; and if suffered to ebb too far, some of the rapids further down, would not have boasted sufficient depth to have floated us to Chepstow. We took a hearty, but hasty breakfast; and I rather think the Welsh girl who waited upon us was not sorry to get rid of her company. We had been more than three hours on the water; and we shall remember the Tintern breakfast with pleasure, if any part of our company go there, or meet each other again. Though in this latter part of our voyage, the water was not so lovely an object in itself, yet the grandeur of the scenery increased upon us every moment—the rocks called "Winlass-leap," and "Lover's-leap," and the more exalted eminence of Wind-cliff, in itself worth going a hundred miles to see—these, with the detached rocks, like buttresses, called the Twelve Apostles, and an infinity of minor beauties, made themselves admired and respected on either

side, until we reached Chepstow castle and bridge; where we quitted the Wye with a regret, which those will best appreciate who have witnessed its power to enchant, and seen the objects in its course.

Arrived at Chepstow about one.—The castle of Chepstow stands on the bank of the Wye, immediately on the brink of a perpendicular rock of vast height. It appears to have been a fortress of uncommon strength. Here Martin the Regicide, as he is called, was long confined by Charles the Second, and one of the towers bears his name. Here each of the party found abundance of exercise for the mind and for the pencil; but having passed Windcliff in our way down the river, we now visited it by land, through the grounds of — Wells, esq. of Persfield, pursuing a wooded walk for about two miles, immediately on the edge of the rocks which overhang the Wye. At nearly one end of this natural terrace, is the precipice called Lover's Leap, down which the eye descends with a fearful complacency, as a

thick wood covers the bottom ground. They told us that its height was about sixty yards; I should guess it more. An iron railing protects the walk at top, and the descent is as steep as a wall. Windcliff, as seen by the map, is something further up the stream, and is magnificently grand. The fantastic turns of the Wye, with its amphitheatre of woods, seemed diminished; but, if possible, increased in beauty. The Severn's mouth, the Holmes in its channel, the shipping at King-road, and all the country from below Bristol upwards, until Gloucester was lost in mist, is completely under the eye. It is here called the second view in England, and by Lord North was preferred to "Mount Edgecomb." The accompanying view of Windcliff is taken from a part of Chepstow Castle; and it will give an additional idea of its magnitude, if you observe that you do not see the river at its foot, but look over very high ground, round which the water comes from the right, towards the centre of the drawing *. If you look on the map from

* Referring to a drawing taken on the spot.

Chepstow Castle to Windcliff, the whole will be understood*. This drawing is done by R. B. Cooper, esq. a principal in our party, who uses his pencil with great freedom and expedition: I prize it on his and every account.

We spent a delightful and social evening at the Beaufort Arms, Chepstow, and retired to rest, but not till we had walked to the castle by moonlight, where we found an owl hooting lustily from the battlements of Marten's Tower: we all stood to listen and admire, and certainly no imagination can form an object, and a scene, half so impressive.

Thursday, the 20th, at Chepstow.—The whole of this morning was spent in a thorough examination of the ruined castle, but the time was too short; many good drawings were made, and I attempted one amongst the rest. The joists of the floors in Marten's Tower are still existing, and are of

* From Chepstow Castle to Windcliff the river crosses the line of sight four times.

solid oak, about a foot square. It appears unaccountable to me, how even by the lapse of ages, nutriment enough can be found for shrubs of so large a growth, as are flourishing between the outer and inner ramparts of these towers, and on the top of the wall of course. This gangway, once the place of the defenders of the fortress and its centinels, is now an absolute wild: a mixture of bramble, hazel, ash, beech, and fruit trees, from twenty to thirty feet high at least. The whole area of the chapel, which I was much taken with (though the man in attendance called it the banqueting-room), is covered with thriving underwood: the look-out from its large windows must have been almost dreadful, as that wall stands on, and is, in truth, a continuation of a perpendicular cliff, much higher than the building itself. The bridge at Chepstow is very narrow (belonging to the two counties), and the flooring is composed of oak planks only, on which both hoofs and wheels batter along in a singular manner: the planks are not

fastened otherwise than at each end by an upright peg, on which, in case of high tides, they have room to lift up ten or twelve inches without losing their places.

Thursday, left Chepstow and the Wye, for Ragland and Abergavenny, and proceeded on to Ragland, where there is another immense castle, in some respects in better preservation than that we had left; but it has not so commanding a situation, and appears more like a baronial residence, than an impregnable fortress. Here is the largest growth of ivy I have ever seen. The whole compass of the walls is nearly complete; but I cannot possibly enter into particulars in a flying journal like this. We spent two hours amongst the ruins; and in a kind of cellaring, the arched way leading to which has partly fallen in, a countrywoman, who offered her services and information, informed us, that, when a light is carried in, it is soon extinguished, and that they say it is because of damps; but for her part she was inclined to believe, with many of her neigh-

bours, that the devil was there. In this building a gigantic stem of ivy has pushed awry the fine fluted work of the kitchen window, and seems to set iron and stone at defiance. The largest elm I have ever seen growing, is found in the yard or grounds of the castle.

We drove on for Abergavenny, where we arrived about nine at night, having the "Sugar-loaf Mountain," "The Skired-Vawr," and Blorench, catching the rays of the setting sun, as we came towards them. It was a noble sight.

Arrived at Abergavenny, nine at night, Friday, 21st.—I am now writing in my bed-room at Abergavenny, before breakfast, with the Sugar-loaf Mountain in view of my window, and before night we shall be on his brow.

I have now discovered that the hill I saw from my window is not the Sugar-loaf, but one of much inferior size. With ten in company, and three servants, it required some little order and contrivance to get us all up

so rugged a way, and to such a distance. We found that as sociables and common carriages could not pass the narrow, stony, and precipitate lanes which lead up to the high ground, the best way would be to hire a carriage on purpose, that would carry half our party. We learned that a man in the neighbourhood, was in the habit of carrying strangers to the top of the Sugar-loaf, and the Skired, and Blorench, &c. and that his conveyance was a common open cart, fitted up with occasional seats for the purpose, and drawn by three little scrambling ponies. The driver and owner is a red-faced little fellow named Powel, who lives on his own small property, and is, perhaps, one of those we might call yeomen, or what in the north are termed statesmen. In this cart were stowed six of us, the rest rode single horses, chiefly fitted with side-saddles, for the accommodation of the ladies, who occasionally relieved each other. The cart was abundantly stored with provisions, wine, bottled ale, and fruit, and every thing that

could render the expedition agreeable and joyous. In this style, the whole cavalcade left the Angel Inn at Abergany, and excited a great deal of mirth. The roads up the mountain are such as nothing could have passed, but a cart; brambles, honeysuckles, and hazelnuts, rapped us on the head as we jolted up the courses of the winter's torrents, for every lane is a water-course. Blorench seemed to rise in greater sublimity, as we ascended the lower hills, or base of the Sugar-loaf. Skired Vawr was on our right, but the day was hazy, and the prospect not so extensive as it sometimes is. We reached the top of the woody part of this high ground, and then had a fairer view of the peak or summit of "Pen y Vale," which I understand to mean the "head of the vale," and which somebody has since baptized by the more melting name of the "Sugar-loaf." I here took to my feet, and steered directly for the summit, while most of the party went slowly round with the cart; but young Parnell Cooper, rode his father's horse,

amidst the rocks and fragments, almost to the summit, where the poor animal trembled and neighed for his companions. I gained the brow by regular and temperate exertion, for I had learned a lesson from Symmons' Yat, gathering whimburys or winberries in my way; and resting on the grotesque and immense fragments of rocks, which appear to have rolled down from the top; which is composed almost of entire rock, and is not a sharp, but a long narrow ridge, of about one hundred yards wide*. It was not possible to drive the cart to the top; so while all the party climbed to the eminence, the driver took a circuit; and the servants relieved each other in the necessary duty of holding the horses, and enjoyed the scene by turns. We all sat on the soft green, or rather brown heath or ling; and from a spring, just below the rocky summit, had some excellent water. From this sublime

* Cox's History of Monmouthshire calls it two hundred wide, by a quarter of a mile long; I think, from recollection, that it is not so much.

eminence, the eye ranges over others still higher, and the blue mists hanging over the horizon, gave to the long line of intersecting mountains, the appearance of a sea of hills. We had left beauty behind, here was nothing but sublimity; and I think that mirth would be the last feeling likely to be excited in such a situation. The air was remarkably fresh and invigorating; some few drops of rain fell, which were most likely not known in the country below. We left the summit with regret. At a considerable way from the more rocky part of the hill, in our descent, a cloth was spread on the moss beside a rivulet, the horses tied to a thorn, and the cold repast, enjoyed with a mutual thankfulness, that is seldom found in a hall amidst the clattering of knives and plates. Again we mounted the Welsh sociable, and descended by another road, though, as to declivity, not a whit better than the other. We at length reached the turnpike road to Abergany, and returned to the inn after an

excursion, which having been long promised and expected, could hardly have been dispensed with, and which, from the universal gratification it gave, appears, now it is over, to have been a principal ingredient in our pleasures.

At Abergavenny, Saturday 22d.—This morning we strolled round the remains of Abergany Castle. It is very much gone to decay: but from the eminence where once stood the keep, the hill called Blorench, on the other side the river Usk, and the Pen-y-Vale hills, which we had ascended the preceding day, presented themselves in a new and magnificent point of view. The morning was inclined to be stormy, and the point of the Sugar-loaf, and great part of his sides, could not be seen. The clouds hung round him, and rolled in dark volumes about his stony girdle. We waited until the sun acquired more power, and saw his head emerge with all the majesty of a monarch.

Left Abergavenny at eleven.—This day's

journey was to take us to Brecon, by way of Crickhowel; at the latter place refreshed by the way. Here likewise are seen some remains of a castle, and the ruins of an old mansion, once belonging to the Earls of Pembroke. The people partake strongly of the Welsh character, and many of them cannot speak English. Three miles further on, turned out of the high road to see the remains of Tre-tower Castle, which stands rather singularly in a deep valley. Here an upright woman, a hundred years old, asked charity, and said her name was "Jane Edwards;" an old shoe-maker answered in Welsh a great many inquiries, through an interpreter, his son, who could speak English, but roughly. From hence to Brecon was a most enchanting ride. Crickhowel mountain, and several others, were covered with clouds, that travelled along on their summits—and these clouds illuminated by the declining sun! And nearer to Brecon, the grotesque and abrupt cluster of points,

called the Vann, were still more enveloped, in clouds of the most dark and terrific hue.

Reached the Golden Lion at Brecon, at nine, 22d. Mr. Morgan, the Recorder of Brecon, being related to Mr. C. of our party, we supped there, and next day, Sunday, 23, attended service at church; and heard some excellent voices in the organ loft, full of simple pathos and feeling. The service is performed in Welsh, at three in the afternoon, for the accommodation of those who do not speak English; and another kind of accommodation is afforded the young men of the country, by the recruiting serjeants; they expose their bills of invitation, with their offer of eleven guineas bounty, in English and in Welsh, side by side. Who would lose a soldier by neglecting to let him know that you want him? Between the church, and dinner hour, Mr. Lloyd Baker and self, on horseback, visited an old British intrenchment, so deemed, I believe, by the late Mr. King, the antiqua-

rian. It consists of a triple bank, round the brow of a hill. And not more than three miles from Brecon, and on the same side of the town, at a farm now termed the Gaer, are the remains of a Roman wall, still so perfect as not to have wholly lost the outer, or facing stones. This appears to have been a Roman station of some importance. Mr. Price, a very civil and intelligent farmer on the spot, gave us every information in his power, and seemed to enjoy it. A paved Roman road crosses his orchard, covered only by grass. A small lamp, found on the premises, is in the possession of Mrs. Price; and several very perfect Roman bricks, are turned up by the plough, all stamped while the clay was wet, as the work of the second legion of Augustus.

In the wild bushy lane, leading down to the Gaer, stands a stone (perhaps five feet high, and three wide, by six inches thick,) called Marn Morinion, or the Maiden's Stone. It has had three lines of inscrip-

tion, now so effaced, that Mr. B. could only make out a few words; but we learned that the whole is deciphered, and is in the possession of a gentleman of Brecon. In the front are two figures, once raised from the surface, but now battered away nearly to a flat. That on the right, appears to have been a Roman soldier, with the dress like a Highland philibeg, or petticoat; the other figure, I think, was a female, but the position of their arms, is not to be made out; and though the figures in my sketch appear so very imperfect, I doubt they are too perfect rather, to be strictly just to the original.

A spot close in the neighbourhood of Brecon, called the Priory Groves, the property of Lord Camden, forms a beautiful walk for the town's people; a stream makes its way, over a number of rocky obstructions, in a deep valley below, keeping a continual murmur, though almost entirely hid by the trees.

Left Brecon Monday morning, 21th.—

This day's journey was to take us to Hereford; we could not attempt to climb the Van Mountains in the neighbourhood, esteemed the highest in South Wales, and which, during our Sunday's ride and this morning's, were continually capped by clouds *.

Mr. and Mrs. Morgan, in their own chariot, accompanied us as far as Hay, in the way to which town, stand the remains of Bronyliss Castle, one tower of which is nearly perfect, except the floors. The walls of this tower are about eleven feet thick. The farmer on the spot, makes use of it for a hay-loft; and he has destroyed great part of the other walls and ruins, to have the materials, to fence his yard, and build a stable. This formed a pleasing subject for the pencil, and my companions enjoyed it, during which, I was thinking of the river

* Price, the farmer, said he could almost to a certainty foretel rain, by the appearance of the clouds on the Van.

Wye, and filling my pockets with nuts. The Severn, and the Wye, both take their rise from the mountain of Plynlimmon. Hay, where we dined, stands on the Wye, and we felt a kind of unaccountable affection for the stream, which had, in its lower progress, given us so much pleasure. Here are likewise fine remains of a castle; and in the churchyard we observed a new grave, strewed with flowers; it is a Welsh custom, and they are often not strewn, but planted on the grave; and carefully weeded by the surviving friends of the deceased. In this case we only observed one sprig of sweet-brier growing; it was a beautiful, sad, and impressive sight, which will make me detest the unhallowed mob of bones in Bunhill fields more than I ever did before: let me be buried any where but in a crowd.

Here we parted with our Brecon friends, and proceeded onwards, passing, on the steep bank of the Wye, the poor remains of Clifford castle, said to be the birthplace of Fair Rosamond. Crossed the Wye a few

miles further on, and then had it on our right, during an uninterrupted ride to Hereford.

At Hereford, Monday night.

During the whole ride the harvest was in all its glory. Orchards abound on each side of the road, and overhang the highway as plentifully as elms do in Suffolk; and the greatest crop is hanging on the trees that has been known for many years.

Hereford is a clean lively city: we lodged at the New Inn; and in the same house was residing the young Roscius, William Betty. He played Achmet on the evening of our arrival; but I declined a squeeze, on so hot an evening. I saw him in the inn yard, in the morning; a well-made youth of about five feet six; a good, but surely not by any means an expressive, countenance. I beg his pardon if I am wrong. He mounted his horse with a kind of tol-de-rol gaiety, and galloped out of the yard.

The tower of the cathedral has a strange *squaddy* appearance; being exceedingly

large, with turrets too small, and the height not according well with the proportion of the building *. The interior is elegant, and contains many very old monuments; but amongst the oddest particulars of this church, is the circumstance, of its having two of the immense arches, under the tower, in the interior of the church, supported by an upright pillar, dividing at the top, so as to destroy the beauty of the arch, and make a singular appearance. These pillars are comparatively modern; and surely there must have been some other cause, not now apparent, to induce any architect to attempt so paradoxical a fancy, as to support an arch from beneath.

Left Hereford at eleven on Tuesday.

This day's journey was to take us from Hereford to the Malvern Hills; and Mr.

* Since writing the above, I have found the following memorandum in the "Tablet of Memory:" Hereford Cathedral nearly destroyed by the fall of its tower, September the 10th, 1786.

L. B. having to call on his friend, Mr. Hopton, of Canfrone, part of the company drove on for Ledbury, where we proposed meeting again. Mr. Hopton has a house of no common sort. It is very large, and fitted up in the first style of elegance, not fantastically modern. Here we dined; and in the true spirit of old English hospitality, the venerable old 'squire asked if we liked good beer, and ordered the servant to bring a bottle of seventy-seven. I found that this beer was three years old, when it was, at the above date, put into bottles, and was consequently brewed when I was eight years old.

We joined our party at Ledbury, and proceeded on for Malvern Hills. Evening came on apace, and darkness overtook us as we crossed the hills, and turned to the left towards Malvern Wells. The road is but narrow, and runs on the side of the hills, giving us a starlight view of the descent below us, and of the eminence, not to say mountain, above. We reached the Well-

house; but they were, with all their appendages, full of company; no beds could be had. Drove down to the town of Great Malvern, and received the same answer there: not even a sitting-room could be had for refreshment, except an offer, which was eventually declined, and which we learned was made by Sir Robert Staples, of the use of his rooms for an hour. It was eight miles further to Worcester, and now very dark, and the horses tired. Every effort was made to procure accommodations, which at last was accomplished, by procuring beds at private houses, &c. This caused more mirth than disappointment; for every one set out at first with a determination to be pleased. I lodged at a shop which was the post-office; and being debarred from the accommodating articles that wait upon my beard, I learned that I could be shaved by a man in the house, and so it proved: for the post-office man was the shaver, though I took him from weighing tea and cheese. He was a surly old fellow, a little on one

side—and so was his house; for the flooring of my bedroom was more out of level than I ever slept on before: it was solid oak, and I dare say perfectly sound: though a large fracture (and there being no plaster below it) showed me the ostlers and maids at early breakfast below me. One of the ostlers snuffled a good deal in his speech; the other was a wit; and the maids (if they were such) were a tolerable match for them.

This morning, having no breakfast-room, had a table set in a garden; and the sun shining bright upon the craggy hills just above us, made it a beautiful and singular scene. We took two saddle-horses for the ladies, and all together began to ascend the highest peak of old Malvern. It was laborious work. This majestic view has been many hundred times described, better than I can do it here; I will however remark, that the Malvern Hills are a range, that rise in comparatively a flat country, and therefore command an extraordinary view. Amongst the objects around, those which we

deliberately observed, were, on the Welsh side, and turning round to the right, the Sugar-loaf, the Skired, the Black Mountains, the city of Hereford, Clay Hills, and the Wrekin in Shropshire. Windbury Hills, the Lickey, Hagley Park, Worcester city (eight miles), Malvern Abbey just below, the whole valley of Stratford on Avon (very distant), Bredon Hill, the long heights of Cotswold, Upton Bridge, down towards the Severn's mouth, and almost to the ocean! A ditch along the ridge of the hills, marks the boundary between the counties of Gloucester and Hereford. I think, if I lived on the spot, I should climb the hills about twice a week, for six months, and then be able to give a tolerable account of the scene—delightful Malvern! I have said above that we *all* climbed the hill; but Mrs. Lloyd Baker, though she had reached the summit of Pen-y-Vale in a state, and far advanced, that "all women would wish to be who love their lords," was, I doubt, *deterred* from this attempt; for I am sure

her spirit would *never* fail, if her reason approved. The old abbey church of Malvern, reminds one of a man in a deep decline, and yet retaining about him all that can attest his former strength and vigour. The woman who exhibited what was there to be seen, was much better informed than many in a similar situation; and gave the most unaffected detail I have ever heard. The whole fabric is uncommonly damp, and discoloured, and unless something is done to arrest the scythe of Time, the roof will soon be on the floor.

Left Malvern for Tewkesbury, Wednesday, one o'clock.—Leaving Malvern Hills, no other striking scenes presented themselves, except works of art, which though I affect not to disregard, I am not so much taken with, or able or willing to describe. From the summit of Malvern, we had observed Upton Bridge in the valley, and now passed it in the road to Tewkesbury. On entering the latter place, I was uncommonly surprised and delighted, with the noble ap-

pearance of the streets; a width, and length, and clearness, and great respectability that I had not been at all apprised of. Bury St. Edmunds I had always esteemed a fine clean town, but the street by which we entered Tewkesbury is at least twice, and at places thrice as wide as Abbey-gate-street, and four times its length,—a more respectable street than Holborn. The Stratford Avon, over which we passed, falls into the Severn at Tewkesbury. The Abbey Church has of late years been beautified * and repaired by Mr. Wyatt; and as to pulpit and seats, is the neatest that can be imagined. Prince Edward, son of Henry the Sixth,

* In the church books of Tewkesbury, which have been preserved for a long time back, are the following entries—"A. D. 1578, paid for the 'Players Geers' six sheep-skins for Christ's garments." And in an inventory recorded in the same book, 1585, are these words—"and order *eight heads of hair for the Apostles, and ten beards, and a face or visor, for the* DEVIL."

Monthly Mirror, 1807.

said to be murdered by Richard, after the battle of Tewkesbury, lies here in the centre of the church, with a small brass inscription. This evening was spent with peculiar pleasure, which we had been promised from our first setting out. Mr. R. B. Cooper had with him his manuscript poem (unfinished), in which he describes his neighbour, Stinchcomb Hill. He read it with very good effect, and it spoke most amply for its subject and its author. I hope some day to see it finished. Here likewise took place a general exhibition and comparison of notes, and sketches, and much good will, with allowances for the bad, and enjoyment of the good.

Left Tewkesbury Thursday morning, for Gloucester, and home.

It was agreed to proceed this last day's journey by way of Cheltenham, and thence to Gloucester to dinner. Cheltenham appears to be an increasing town, full of dashing shops, and full of what is often called life, *i. e.* high life. I am not qualified to

judge of high life, and may be laughed at for my strictures; but as I never feel happy in Bond-street, I see no reason that I should here. The visitors seem distressed for something to do, and I know of no calamity equal to it. I proposed calling on Doctor Jenner, who joined our party in the walks, and sent a Cheltenham gift for my wife, which shall remain in my family with his former tokens between us.

Spent about three hours at Cheltenham, and drove on for Gloucester, where we dined at three, at the King's Head. The Cathedral is beauty itself.—Westminster is black and venerable;—Canterbury is gigantic, and mixed in its beauties; but this, and particularly the tower, is a noble and lovely object. We look at it as we would at a beautiful woman, without cessation, and without tiring. Gloucester Cathedral is the burying-place of Robert of Normandy, and of Edward the Second, murdered at Berkeley. The city is fine, and is a busy scene, but I was more struck with Tewkesbury. From

Gloucester we proceeded for home, which we reached about nine at night;

> Nor stopt till where we first got up
> We did again get down.

Dursley and Uley, as I have said already, are singularly beautiful as to situation. Yet such is the force of a set of new ideas, that the most cheerful individuals of the party now thought their beauties tame, because they were compared with what we had seen. I have imbibed the highest degree of affection for all the individuals of the party, from the most natural cause in the world—because they all seemed glad to give me pleasure, and I shall forget them all,—when my grave is strewn with flowers.

R. BLOOMFIELD.

N. B. Before I left the country, visited Berkeley Castle, and gained much comparative information, from here observing a castle, still habitable and perfect, with all the characteristics of a castle which I had so repeatedly seen in a state of dilapidation. The room where Edward was murdered has a hor-

rid kind of appearance. I returned to London by way of Oxford, and spent a day there, for fear I should never have such another chance. But to tell here of Oxford sights, great and highly interesting as they are, will never do. I leave the task to hands more methodical and more able, and return with delight, to my humble home.

ROBERT BLOOMFIELD.

ANECDOTES

AND

OBSERVATIONS.

ANECDOTES AND OBSERVATIONS.

March 12th, 1801.—About sixteen years ago, a relation (who I think had a daughter) of Daniel de Foe, the author of Crusoe, lived in Broker Row, Moorfields. He was an old man, and kept a small shoemaker's shop, and had done many years; but I am not quite sure that the relationship was on *his* side; it might be on his wife's.

The notices commonly put upon walls, for bill-stickers to read and tremble, are generally worded with a threat of their being prosecuted, &c. I noticed a board affixed to the Tabernacle of G. Whitfield, worded thus—"Please to take notice, if any Bills

are put against this building, they will immediately be taken down."

Providence has a very difficult task to please the creature MAN; the latter neglects his proper avocation, Agriculture, to go in search of black eyes and bloody noses, commonly called military glory, and then blames his Maker for not sending him a proper supply of food.—*Publican's Newspaper.*

I think a small kind of carriage to hold one person might be made to go on the ice with great velocity, if the whole strength of the rider could be exerted for that purpose. By the help of a sharp spike, or a pole with three or more spikes, to strike or lay hold on the ice, a great weight might be put in motion. Perhaps some such childish contrivance as this may be in use, though unknown to me. I should like to try it, and convince myself of its practicability. As to the material point, guiding the carriage,

I can conceive no method; I like to see skaiting, and I should like to see this. Such a light thing on wheels might be tried on land; but I doubt the labour would be too much. This nonsense makes me think (as indeed I have always done) what a pleasure it must be, to be able to draw.

I never see a fine prospect but I wish to bring it away with me. The house and grounds at Wakefield, I have in the store-house of memory; but I should like to have them on paper. I should extremely like to have a view of Honington Green, as it was till the Inclosing Act took place. Wakefield I may (though unlikely) see again; but my native Green, with its daisies, I never shall. To take such a small bit of ground and divide it into three, was hardly worth while. What man, with a sack of wheat on his back, would stoop for one grain?

Inclosing Acts! I do not much like the rage for them. They cut down the solemn,

the venerable tree, and *sometimes* plant another,—*not always;* like a mereenary soldier, who kills more than he begets. Resolved—As shepherds are thus going out of fashion, and smiths, &c., coming in: could I not make the old steeple lament the destruction of shades as old as itself, and make a shepherd reply? &c. &c. But it grows near "witching time of night," and I perceive I am writing nonsense. If I had had a critic here at my elbow, he would have found it out long ago.

Remarks on the Garden Spider.

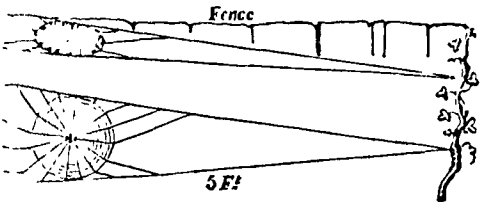
August 14, 1801.—This morning observed a garden spider, who had one of his own species in durance, holding him suspended, but without much appearance of a web. The prisoner was alive, but a mere skeleton. After a while he was suffered to fall, or the wind forced him from his captivity; but, in falling, he unfortunately struck against a half-formed web, the archi-

tect of which I had just been watching, and observed, that all the lines leading from the centre to the extremities were finished; and he was busy, going a continued circle, and joining each with a fresh web, which he drew from his posteriors, at regular strokes, by an extension of his longest legs behind. The beforementioned prisoner fell against his web, and he immediately left work to secure him, being still alive, and having legs not at all diminished, though his body was wasted. His new conqueror seized him, and, rolling him up in a strong web, dragged him to the centre, and there left him secure, and returned to his work, which he soon completed. I had observed him about a quarter of an hour previous to this adventure, and remarked that he caught a number of very small flies, which abounded on every weed, after much rain in the night; and I was not a little surprised that these minute creatures did not stop his progress, but were instantly devoured; not as I expected, by sucking their bodies dry: he

took them up very orderly, and very distinctly, and devoured them, wings and all, without leaving the smallest appearance of a fragment. He had eaten seven of these flies before the spider fell in his way.

August 20, 1801.—A spider of this kind, of an enormous size, has now a web, of about a foot in diameter, hung with spoils, against a wooden fence in the yard. I have repeatedly seen them working their webs, but never could see them begin. The insect, here mentioned, has attached his work on one side to the fence, from which it projects obliquely, and is suspended to a branch of a vine, at the distance of five feet from the circle of the web. As the suspending lines are very strong, and run exactly horizontally, without any intermediate support, it is wonderful to me, to think how they could have been carried so far. A double five foot line, which leaves the fence in this direction, must have been a curious work for him.

In the outline here given, the upper sketch is looking down on the work; the under one is looking horizontally.



The body of the spider being nearly half an inch in length, he has more than twenty-four times his length in one foot, and, consequently, one hundred and twenty times in his suspending lines. Now, taking the standard of a man at five feet six inches, one hundred and twenty times his length, will be six hundred and sixty feet, or two hundred and twenty yards; about three times the height of the Monument. If we were set to tie the tops of the steeples of London together with a cord, without scaffolding, should not we be puzzled to contrive it? We should go to school to

spiders, and ants, and bees; but of all these —the spider does his work *alone.*

September 9, 1801.—This morning, extricated a bee from a web, but without any signs of life. Another web contained a bee larger than the common honey bee; he appeared completely enveloped in a winding-sheet of the web, of a very large spider, whose premises he had unfortunately trespassed upon. Thus it is evident that this tiger of an insect devours creatures larger than itself. If the means by which he is enabled to do so were common to the beasts of the forest, how dreadful would be a net spun by the lion or the tiger, from which the horse and his rider could not disentangle themselves, no more than a strong bee can from this pest of the garden.

September 14th, 1801.—Having expressed surprise at the work of a spider, I can now trace with certainty his operations and his power, so as to satisfy my-

self entirely. Often wondering how came all the long webs that tickle our noses and glitter in the sun, reaching from one tree to another, and often floating loose in the air; I, a few days past, broke down the web of a garden spider, which was suspended from a building to a fence across a pathway of about five feet, and much the same height from the ground. When his suspending lines were broke, himself and his web fell flat against the building. An hour or two after, I observed him in motion, and wished to know how he would contrive a communication with the fence as before.

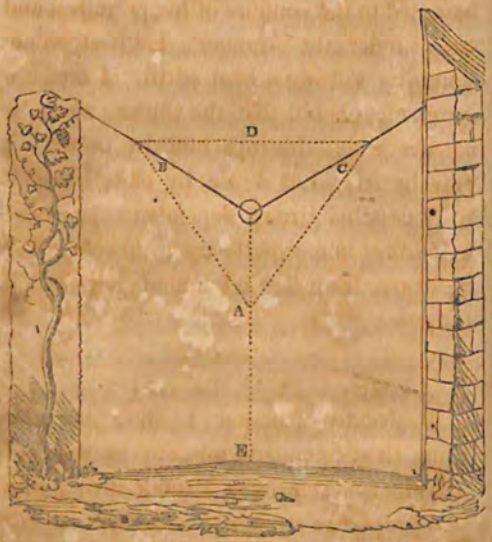
He seemed, for a while, as if taking a general survey of the distance and bearings of the objects around; and then letting himself down from a spout to the distance of about six inches, hung suspended, not in their usual position, head downwards, but with one side downwards, and all his legs greatly extended. In this posture I found that, without the help of his legs, he possessed a power of ejecting a web to what

length he pleased, and with surprising swiftness. It had exactly the appearance of smoke issuing through a pin hole; only, in this case, the stream instead of dissipating, became a lengthening line, that floated with the action of the wind, and visibly extended from its source, as fast, or faster than the nimblest black beetle can run. He emitted thus, about seven or eight feet of web, and then ascended to the spout, and waited the event. The line was carried by the wind cornerways, and lodged against the building, and consequently became useless. He did the same again, with the same want of success, and repeated his work a fourth time, when I caught hold of his floating line, at about four feet long, and when extended to five, I drew it over the leaf of a bean, and it became fast; but he, still lengthening it, the line was very slack. After a few minutes he applied himself to drawing the rope tight, which, when done, he travelled upon it to the opposite side, and made my fastening secure; then back again,

emitting a new web as he went, and joining it to the other to strengthen it, till it became visibly improved.

Next, starting from one end, he proceeded, without splicing a new strengthener, to the centre of the horizontal line, *exactly to the centre*, and there lowered himself down to the ground, and drew this perpendicular line very tight, or else it was his weight that did it. The ground beneath was a gravel path; he there fastened this line to the gravel, at E (see sketch), by pressing it down with a motion peculiar to themselves, and then ascended again: at which time he had formed an obtuse angle, by drawing down the horizontal line; then, forwarding his work, he drew the line D, to which the lines from the centre were to be fastened. To form the line D, he traversed the lines B C, bearing the line D in his claw detached, and, fastening it at the upper end of B, proceeded to draw the lines from A to C and B in the same manner. From this outline, the formation of the lines

from the centre to the extremities appeared easy.



I have sometimes broken down a part of their work, and have observed that they will carefully gather up the fragments of the web, and either leave it in white knots, or appear entirely to swallow it.

A *small* spider had fastened a line of

his work, to the outermost lines of a web, belonging to a very *large* one; the latter hastened to the confines of his premises, and cut asunder the stranger's holdfast, something like cutting a boat adrift. I find it a common opinion, that the spider, when he catches a fly, destroys him by poison; it may be so;—but I see, by close observation, that his strong dependence is placed in folding him rapidly up in a web, which he draws from himself abundantly for the purpose.

I wonder whether I shall hereafter think these moments mispent in watching a spider?—At present I think their nature and properties strange, and not yet entirely known, even to naturalists; their whole proceedings amazingly curious; their degree of instinctive contrivance, and their exactness of figure in their squares and angles, and visible *use* of every line, truly astonishing.

The spider, while descending by his

web, was baited by the flies, in the same manner as we see a hawk baited by the smaller birds *.

October 4th, 1802.—Found last week a letter in the Gentleman's Magazine for 1759 (I think), by a Mr. Masser, 'on the Gossimer,' wherein he has been correct in his account of the spider having an ejecting power, as to the formation of his web. I found this by observation last summer, and was pleased at the discovery, for to *me* it was such. But his account of flying spiders

* It is now known, that the spider sometimes exhausts the material from which his web is formed; in which case, he is in imminent danger of starvation. I once saw a spider reduced to this extremity, running wildly about on a sunny board. Several large flies, who seemed to enjoy his distress, tormented him, by settling within an inch of his nose; and when the spider made a rush to seize one, he would take a short flight, and settle down again at about the same distance. This game lasted nearly two hours; when the spider's strength and patience appearing to be quite worn out, he retired to a hole.—Ed.

is not clear and comprehensive. Does he mean spiders with wings? or, spiders with a power of unlimited elevation, by an ejectment of web?

Spiders again.

Proved, by observing a spider with a small microscope, that when I had broken down a web in the garden, he carefully gathered up the fragments, and moistening the accumulated web in its approach to his mouth, swallowed it all again.

General Observations.

In addition to the foregoing extracts, I now wish to say a word or two in farther explanation. The nests of this kind of spider are generally attached fast to woodwork, in a dry situation, in size not exceeding an hazel-nut, appearing like a knot of raw silk, of an exceeding close texture. I put one of these into an unstopped bottle, and, forgetting to watch it minutely, I at length found it as follows: From the mouth of the bottle to a shelf above, was about

eighteen inches; and I found the eggs hatched, and not less than several hundreds of connecting lines of communication between the bottle and the shelf, covered in every direction with the infant swarm, entirely yellow. From this I think it evident, that the power of ejecting the web is exercised at an early stage of life. I think too, from every consideration, that their preying on each other is a matter beyond a doubt.

I have somewhere read, that the garden spider uniformly makes his web of great or small dimensions, according to the approaching degree of sunshine or rain, and thus, with the utmost precision, foretels the weather. This I have not yet proved, but am much inclined to give credit to the assertion.

Custom not only imposes on us modes of dress, and sometimes of conduct, which our reason does not approve, but prevents us from adopting many a useful practice or improvement. I have read somewhere, of

the northern nations, wearing a contrivance of wood, to screen the sight, from the reflection of sunbeams from the snow, which, unobstructed, is injurious to the sight. Custom *there*, does not forbid them to preserve their eyes; but *here*, where in the summer months, the sunbeams are reflected from the gravel of the roads, and from the pavement of the streets, in almost an intolerable manner;—where the evil of too much light is evident in every one's face, and every eye is half-closed to exclude it;—where thousands, in their walks of pleasure, would gladly gaze on the distant objects before them—the hills, the villages, and the woods, if the quivering of the sun's rays, and his flood of light would permit them; where thousands (myself amongst them) come home with the anguish and languor of a headach, and with eye-balls parched and painful, from having been forced to meet a light ten times stronger than they could bear; if a person, I say, was to put a crape over his eyes, or any contrivance to remedy

the evil, the novelty of his appearance would be a real trouble to him, by subjecting him to the scoffs and insults of fools: and yet the pleasure of walking with ease to one's self, is a thing which no one will contemn, when he consults *reason* only. The prevalence of too much light is to me a serious evil, and I am convinced is hurtful to the sight. Our mothers tell us not to gaze on the sun, and not to read or work by a bad light, thus warning us that extremes are to be avoided; and our *feelings* tell us to double our clothes in winter, and to strip in summer; to eat our broth when it is cool enough, and not scald our throats; and many other good things would our feelings tell us, if they were properly attended to.

What a wide difference may be seen between the manner of bringing up children, as to the chance they have of seeing in their youth, what we call the beauties of Nature.

If I had been placed in my infancy in the situation of one of the boys who worked in the same garret with me,—had I possessed the power of writing poetry to please the world,—I must have wanted materials at least, to have written what I have. Poor Jem Bailey, was, with four others, left motherless; his father turned them over to the workhouse, situated somewhere in Southwark. When Jem became old enough, he was sent out as errand-boy, to any one who might want such a boy, for which he got nothing but food. He lived with a Doctor, and carried nostrums from morning till night: his master giving him a livery-coat, to raise his own consequence with those he attended. (This was his best coat when he came as an apprentice to the boot-trade.) Another of his masters kept a fishing-tackle shop, in Crooked-lane, and of course part of his trade was to have *maggots* or *gentles* to sell to those, who had patience enough to angle in the New River. To obtain this bait, a quantity of bullocks' lights was exposed to the flies on the leads, of the house;

and often have I heard the poor boy express the abhorrence he felt, when called from his dinner to serve a ha'p'orth of gentles, which was done by shaking the lights, and picking up the fruit.

Lord Kenyon's integrity, as stated in the accounts of trials in the newspapers, (for I never saw him), gives me the highest idea of the character of a Judge, which I have ever found. His office, arms him with power: but the exertion of power is marked with the peculiarity of the possessor. The determined and pithy reproofs he gives to notorious guilt, are the most shining examples of honesty to be found in the language.

At the time the Albion Mills were burned, I never saw the newspapers; and led so recluse a life, that three days elapsed before I heard of it, though I lived in Chiswell-street; a proof that there may be now living in Paris, persons, who saw little or nothing of the great events which have taken place

there. Again—when five hundred houses were burning at Ratcliffe, some years ago, I did not know it till the next night! A man's *mind* may be travelling half over the globe, and yet know little of what is doing next door.

" Full many a gem of purest ray serene,
" The dark unfathomed caves of ocean bear."

The sovereign contempt with which too many of the wealthy, and (I fear also) of the learned, look upon what are termed " the dregs of the people," has often raised an equal contempt on my side, for that wealth, which engenders such thoughts of the immense distance, which those " dregs are from the surface." The distance is not so great as the vain man flatters himself it is; I have known mechanics, who in general information, and in powers of intellect, have stood decidedly before thousands of their own rank. Is it not decidedly so among gentlemen—one clever fellow to a great many dull ones? I have heard more

sense and truth in a tap-room, than I have sometimes heard in better company; and there is nothing more striking to me, (and I have been placed so as to observe it,) than that *total* ignorance of the *manner of living* among the poor—that superficial and vague idea of who and what they are—of what they talk, and of what they think! Nothing to me has appeared more strange or more disgusting, than finding amongst those ranks, raised above the mechanic and labourer, such a mean opinion of the poor! Gentlemen, 'tis true, seldom enter alleys, or see the domestic habits of those nests of human wretchedness: and they think, perhaps, that poverty must of necessity be accompanied with ignorance; but I find that a man who works for his living, and reads whatever he can catch ——————! His whole soul is bent to that point; and if nature has given him a talent for observation, no situation can make him contemptible. If a great and noble mind is granted by nature to only one in a thousand—does she order that that one, shall not be born in

an alley? That he *must* be *rich*, or *great?* Does nature, when she makes an orator, provide him a seat in the House of Commons? —A poor man with a strong mind will make himself respected in his circle, and make useful remarks on every occurrence. A rich man, with great native powers, will do the same. A poor man, with a moderate understanding, will remain at the bottom of his class. A rich man of inferior powers will do the same, in spite of all that can be done for him.

"Worth makes the man, and want of it the fellow."

A short time ago, the publicans' paper, after stating that the price of corn and flour did not fall in consequence of an abundant harvest, added—"Let our avaricious tyrants *blush!* Let them *dread* the vengeance of parliament! The *guardians* of the people!" By placing certain words in italics, I suppose it to be wholly ironical; if not, the joke is better still: for what

dreadful punishment will a man inflict on himself?

In their paper of to-day they finish a paragraph of the same sort thus:—"How long these plans of extortion are to continue, Heaven only knows—for to Heaven only can the people look for relief."

Now by this last sentence, one would think they had found out, that the dealers in corn were not likely to blush, or to tremble; and that many of them were among the guardians of the people.

This moment heard the heart-cheering, glorious news of peace!

> Halt! ye legions, sheath your steel,
> Blood grows precious! shed no more—
> Cease your toils.

Walker's Gazetteer describes Stone-henge, and says that one of the stones measures, according to Doctor Hales, twenty-five feet long, seven feet broad, three and a half feet

thick, and says, that no mechanical power now known, could raise such a weight. Guthrie's Grammar describes the Pagoda of Chillambrune, near Porto-Nova, on the Coromandal Coast; its entrance beneath a pyramid a hundred and twenty-two feet high, built with large stones above forty feet long, and more than five feet square."

And of the Pagoda of Seringham, the outer wall of which makes a circumference of four miles; its southern gates are supported by pillars composed of single stones, thirty-three feet long, and nearly five in diameter. This wall encloses six others at equal distances, twenty-five feet high, and four thick! *

Dined lately in company with Mr. Peel and his brother, who have brought the skeleton of the Mammoth from America: both clever fellows, and masters of their study.

* Orme's History of Hindostan, vol. i. page 178.

Dimensions of the Skeleton now exhibiting in Pall Mall, November 25, 1802.

	Ft.	In.
Height over the shoulders	11	0
Length from the chin to the rump...	15	0
Width of the hips and body	5	0
Length of the under jaw.....	2	10
Weight of the same, 63½ lbs.		
Width of the head	3	2
Length of the thigh bone	3	7
Ditto of the large bone of the fore leg	2	10
Largest circumference of the same	3	2½
Length of shoulder blade.....	3	1
Longest rib, without cartilage	4	7
Length of the tusks, defences, or horns	10	7
Circumference of one tooth or grinder	1	6½.
Weight of the same, 4lb. 10 oz.		
The whole weighs about 1000 lbs.		

This skeleton was dug up almost entire, but the tusks were rotten, so that artificial tusks (made in imitation of a real one, which now lies in the room in a decayed state), are put to this skeleton; but the use of these tusks appears doubtful; and perhaps were not placed as they are here. His teeth,

prove most clearly, that he did not feed on vegetable food, and yet his swallow appears much straitened, for so immense a creature.

This skeleton was found lying at the bottom of a bog, several feet from the surface. Parts of the bones of this kind of animal have been found on the banks of the Ohio, and in various other parts of America, to the number, it is supposed, of fifty; so that the animal, though now an extinct race, has been numerous; and as remains of shell-fish are found with the bones, it is conjectured that an inundation destroyed the race, and left us to wonder at what must have lived, though so much larger than any animal now known to exist—not excepting the elephant. Bones of this creature are found vastly much larger than the skeleton. A thigh bone now lies in the room, some inches longer than those in the skeleton, and a tooth of seven pounds weight is now at Philadelphia.

Miss Johnson, with whom I dined at the White Hart Inn, Fetter-lane, was personally acquainted with Burns; who, breakfasting with her, drank a large tumbler of beer previous to taking either eatables or tea, saying that he had been up till three in the morning, and had drank too much wine. On Miss J.'s remonstrating with him as to the injury to which he exposed his health, he replied, "Madam, they would not thank me for my company, if I did not drink with them. *I must give them a slice of my constitution.*" I wish Burns had given them thinner slices of his constitution, that it might have lasted longer; I then might possibly have had the pleasure of seeing him. He died but two months after I began composing The Farmer's Boy! though at that time, and long after, his death and history were unknown to me.

Amongst the glory of England (her unparalleled Charitable Institutions), one more,

I think, might be added. A fund to purchase beds for new married couples, under proper regulations, and with the accustomed recommendations as to character, and deserts. This heavy expense (to the poor) is a serious affair, and if not accomplished before the fruits of marriage smile them in the face, it then (when most wanted) becomes more difficult still. I have said of Walter and Jane—

> Give love and honest industry their way,
> Clear but the sun-rise of life's little day.

Lumping of ages together, as is sometimes done in the newspapers, I cannot relish. It means nothing. I remember seeing six or seven men of great age mentioned, with the common observation of their united ages making so many hundred years. Amongst them were John Wesley, Macklin, and the late Lord Mansfield. They were all *old men:* but the wonder was not

increased by the adding into one total, the age of many contemporaries, any more than if we were to say—In the parish of Hackney live seven men, whose perpendicular height when placed on each others' heads, amounts to the surprising total of forty-three feet!

I have seen it regretted, that Dr. Young burnt his loose papers before his death.

I have seen it regretted, that Dr. Johnson did *not* burn his loose papers before his death!!!

At the time of the illuminations for Nelson's victory, I thought if I had had the means to have sported a transparency, I might have quibbled thus:—

Duncan, Jervis, and Howe,
What say you all now—
(For by you were our triumphs begun:)
In the midst of alarms,
You fought well with *both* arms—
But Nelson has beat them with *one!*

I remember, too, beginning a song on that subject:—

Old Nile lately cried from his seven-mouth'd bed,
"Can such echoes proceed from a cloud?
For ages I've roll'd, and my banks overspread,
But never heard thunder so loud," &c.

The great Oak in Euston Park.—Myself, my wife, and my daughter Hannah, (then nine years and a half old), embraced his rough rind at arm's-length, touching our fingers; and could thus encompass it all but about half a yard. By observation afterwards, I found the girth of this tree to be fifteen feet, in May, 1801.

"Children, like tender oziers, take the bow;
And as they first are fashion'd, always grow."

So says Mr. Gay. I was fifteen years old, when I first thought the last line untrue. I have more than doubled that age; and I think so still. It will not do for a maxim.

Joseph Condit, jun. of Bloomfield, New Jersey, has obtained a patent from the United States, securing to him the benefit of a discovery which he has made in manufacturing paper from the shavings of tanned leather, commonly called curriers' shavings.

One half-acre of land, opposite the Prince of Wales's at Brighton, sold for 3500 guineas. My old shopmate, Charles Jones, states, that between twenty and thirty years ago, the Duke of Athol, speaking on the subject of the land-tax in the House of Peers, offered to sell a thousand acres of land, right and title for ever, for a thousand half-crowns!

Charles Jones's brother lent a shopmate his great coat, on a particular occasion. On his return home, this shoemaker declared that he never walked the streets so uncomfortably in his life. Wherever he went, the beggars were after him at every corner;

and he concluded by protesting that he would not wear a good coat upon any account whatever. He most likely kept his word; for he was a terrible drunkard.

Could not the great features, of the history of the world, be represented by something like a firework? Suppose a number of *fixed* lights to represent the rise and fall of empires. Carthage might brighten to its zenith; and then Rome might arise in all its glories, and decline likewise. The Ottoman power, and the caliphs of Arabia; the blazing of the butchers of the East; the Tartar princes, and all the principal transactions recorded in history. If this could be done on a sufficient scale, and the ground-work be a map of the world, and the lights be made governable, as in Walker's orrery—— But this is dreaming!—dreaming!

It is very natural that the working poor should, in their endeavour to finish their

work, and to add a few shillings to their day's or week's reckoning, sometimes transgress against the time allowed by masters for the taking in, and paying for their work; and it is just as natural for them, when reproved, to attempt some excuse. Mr. Chamberlain, who employed many hands (my brother and self amongst them), used to have an answer ready for one common excuse.—The journeymen or their wives would plead that "they had made all possible haste to shop." "That's saying nothing," says Chamberlain; "*you should have set out sooner.*"

This answer might be applied in several other cases with equal justice:—

To the *worldling*, who has lately become such, and who grumbles that he has saved no more;

To the *sailor*, who loiters away a fair wind, and loses his market;

And, perhaps, to the *man who marries at forty*, and gets a young family—"You should have set out sooner."

Dr. Walker, who is just returned from Egypt, where he spread the vaccine inoculation in the army and navy, relates the following anecdote of the author of "The Rights of Man," which Paine himself had given in a company at Paris, where Dr. Walker was present. When a boy, he (Paine) went, in company with his sister—I think it was—to Fakenham wood, in search of nuts; and being by themselves, they wandered out of their knowledge, and knew not the way out again. In this dilemma, Tom, proposed that his sister should stand at a certain spot, while he went a short distance to climb some tree, to see his way out of the wood. He climbed the tree, and missing his hold, fell to the ground, and remembers reviving at the foot of the tree, and finding his sister supporting him. He was bruised, but with whole bones. They were belated and frightened; and both agreed to keep it a secret from their father: and Tom, knowing that his father made a practice of taking pills, thought that pills might do him good

too. He took them accordingly, and luckily without producing any bad effect. He got well, and all was secret.

In relating this story of Tom Paine, Dr. W. remarked, that there are many thousands who will probably exclaim, "What a pity that he had not broke his neck!" But, on the other hand, continued he, when I heard him relate it at Paris, one exclaimed, "The guardian angel of liberty was near thee, Thomas!" Dr. W. is a warm republican. I think him an intelligent, a good, and an honest man.

Memorandum of Folly.—My good old aunt Austin had many sickly children; burying nine under three years old. With one of them, which was very ailing and fretful, a superstitious cure was attempted. I remember an old woman (Mrs. Osborne, of Honington) being employed to "cut the child for the spleen." The child's ear was cut so as to bleed, and the blood applied

on the temples *in the form of a cross*, and, I believe, with something repeated by way of *charm*; for she had charms for the ague, &c.—The child died.

Remember having my fancy set to work by a strange and ridiculous song, about a child going to school and meeting the devil, and having a long conversation with him, and showing him a great deal of wit and repartee:—

"What have you in your basket?"
Says the false, false knight.
"Bread and butter for my dinner,"
Says the pretty little baby;
And still by the bush she stood.

"Whose sheep are those in the pasture?"
Says the false black knight.
"Some of them are my father's,"
Says the pretty little baby;
And still by the bush she stood.

"Which of them are your father's?"
Says the false, false knight.
"All those that have tails behind,"
Says the pretty little baby;
And still by the bush she stood.

"Whose stacks of corn are those?"
Says the coal-black knight.
"My father's," &c.

"I wish they were all on fire,'
Says the false, false knight.
"And you all in the middle on't,"
Says the pretty little baby, &c.

Thus it proceeds for about twenty verses, and I doubt I forget the best of it—*what* would more certainly have determined its origin, whether from monks or old women, or from some village bard, when the hero of the ballad, the coal-black knight, was in high repute. If this is an ancient ballad, and of no uncommon sort, in English villages, how does it happen that ancient Scotch ballads possess so many beauties? Or are they only sifted from heaps of rubbish like the above? If so, perhaps a col-

lection of English might be formed by the same means. This ditty, sung to the thrum of the spinning-wheel, had its attractions; and this girl (now named Thompson), and one of the Whiteheads—I think, Sarah—when a girl, were the only persons who ever sung the ballad to my fancy.

Another song, which my brother Isaac knew when a boy, begins—

"There was an old ewe, who had but one horn,
Chronomo no no none;
——— could never keep her out of the corn.
Turn round the wheel, my Bunny.

The butcher came in, with his sharp knife,
Chronomo, &c.
And scared the old ewe almost out of her life.
Turn, &c.

She ground her teeth, and she mumbled her pegs,
Chronomo, &c.
And she ran at the butcher, and broke both his legs.
Turn, &c."

This is evidently a spinning-wheel song; but perhaps of later date than the former.

The last Sunday in March breakfasted with Mr. Rogers; visited Mr. Stothard; and having to see the Duke of Grafton at five, spent the intermediate hours in Kensington-gardens: and recollecting that a razor was to pass my chin before I went there, I sought, and found a little shop in Kensington. The barber was gone half a mile from home, to shave a gentleman. He presently came in, and throwing off his hat and wig, gave vent to his perspiration and his anger both together. The person was gone out when he got there, and he had his walk for nothing!—How abominably these things plague a poor man, and disconcert his week's work; and he has no remedy—no action for damages!—The bald-pated, angry old man began his operations upon me; and I was not quite free from apprehensions on account of his perturbation and appearance—but trust not appearances! When he had nearly finished, he ordered his girl to wet the corner of a cloth—I wondered what he wanted with it. It was instantly applied to my face; and though this was the first

time I had had my face washed by a barber, it appeared to be his custom. These scenes remind me of " Roderick " and his friend " Strap." Smollett would have made something out of it. [Observed, while refreshing myself at Kensington, a tradesman's board, inscribed

NEVERS,

Corn Dealer; Malt, Hops, &c.; Coals, wholesale and retail;
Charcoal, Cheesemongery, &c.

The proximity of charcoal and cheesemongery, looks rather whimsical.

In our trade, when any one reads the newspapers or a book, by the neighbourly custom of sitting all in one room, and by that great privilege, of its not hindering the progress of our work, we have nothing to do, but to discuss the subject. *Community*, is perhaps the point, to which those who say that, " shoemakers are politicians," might

trace the solution of their wonder. But even a newspaper is not all politics. No one can read the daily prints without either learning, or feeling, his want of geographical knowledge. This must lead him to maps; and maps to reflection: and this reflection, unless it can be proved that it leads him to discontent, is praiseworthy, and full of pleasure to himself.

The highest ground in London is about Newgate-street. A stone, with an old inscription, is fixed on the wall of a baker's house, in a passage leading into Paternoster-row. I was lately led, from a kind of inadvertent curiosity, to look up to see who had the honour of living on the highest ground, and found the name James Bloomfield—Wonder, if from my country?

The brig Deane, Captain W. D. which arrived at Liverpool on Thursday, from Kentucky, with a cargo of cotton, was built on the Allegany river, in Pennsylvania, and came down the river Ohio into the Mississippi, having passed the great falls of the Ohio, and sailed a distance of nearly three thousand miles within the land. She is the first vessel, which ever came to Europe, from the western waters of the United States.—*British Press, July* 12, 1803.

August 4, 1804.—State of the Nation (prophetical).—We shall have *one* out of *three;* namely, either

A sudden peace;

A powerful continental diversion *; or,

A tremendous attack, and war on our own shores.

* A powerful continental diversion took place a year after writing the above: but Napoleon has now, at the battle of Austerlitz, compelled them to be quiet, and will return upon us again. I write this upon New Year's Day, 1806.

The senseless scurrility, of the public papers, is a disgrace to the country, and to every thing like what I understand by the liberty of the press.

Mackintosh on the Revolution of France, p. 23.—" The deficit, or inferiority of the revenue to the expenditure, at length arose to the enormous sum of 115 millions of livres, or about 4,750,000*l.* annually."

Introduction, page 18.—" The Revolution, whether it be beneficial or injurious, was produced only by general causes, where the conspicuous individual produced little real effect."

March, 1810.—Mr. Arnold, painter, of Buckingham-place, near Fitzroy-square, has an extract from the parish register of Bowes, or Brows, in Yorkshire, which records the burial of Robert Rightson and Mary Rail-

ton. The former died in a fever; the latter almost instantly, on hearing the bell toll for her lover. To this we owe the beautiful ballad of "Edwin and Emma," as appears likewise from the first edition of the ballad now in his hands.

REFLECTIONS.

REFLECTIONS.

I ALMOST repine that I know nothing of astronomy. Mr. Lofft often mentions to me things relating thereto, in his letters; I wish I could understand him——"Past one o'clock: a cloudy morning!" Thus comes in the 15th of March, 1801. That poor man, perhaps, has but eighteen-pence a night for being in the cold—to bed! to bed!

When I think on Egyptian architecture, it seems an oak in a forest of shrubs. Time sweeps away the habitations of men—the under-works of art—as man sweeps away

the underwood of a forest: but the pyramid and the oak remain. If London should sink into oblivion, or at least dwindle into a village, what will be the most imperishable thing in the ruin? The foundations of the bridges would stand a good tug against the assaults of time, and the proud cathedral would hold its elevated ruins full of owls and ivy; still to be wondered at, when the dwellings should be no more. The greatest undertakings that I know of, now going on, are the Wet Docks at the Isle of Dogs. Thirty acres of land sunk to so great a depth seems a huge attempt: but it is only digging a hole after all! If it could be possible for London to become a Babylon, the chafings and surgings of old Father Thames—for HE would not stop—would leave no traces of labour or art in the docks; nature would soon blot out the boast of a nation, and the strong arm of the invariable tide . . . . . But I was going to say, that I could almost wish for some edifice, in or near the capital, that

should perpetuate the site of the city. And yet if the walls of Babylon were indeed as substantial as they are said to have been, where are they gone?

When London-people walk out of town, like bees from a hive (only seldom on so good an errand), how entirely unacquainted they appear to be, with the warning which the rising clouds give of the approach of a shower. It looks strange, if not laughable, to see a number of well-dressed people, sauntering with the utmost composure from their homes, full in the face of a black and threatening cloud, which in ten minutes is to involve them in trouble and vexation. But though the countryman keeps his eyes on the heavens, and preserves a dry coat, he could not turn a corner, or escape a hackney coach, with the dexterity of a Londoner. Every one to his trade!

94533

A brother-tradesman in the City-road has inscribed over his stall,

"MASON,

Shoemaker and Repairer in general."

Well done, shopmate! "Shoes neatly mended," the common sign for a cobbler, you, no doubt, objected to: but you are a cobbler at last, and why should you be ashamed of it?

I think that ambition, courage, and sensibility may "run in the blood," as we term it. Should any one of these qualities, or any conspicuous vice or virtue, actually belong to a family, which happens to govern a nation, such inherent quality ought to be expected in *any* of its branches; even if the party is not known to be of the family, or is in disguise, as is frequently represented in novels and plays. But that a hidden something, an *innate nobility*, a *royalty by na-*

ture, should be looked for in every great personage, or person raised accidentally to power, is nonsense in itself, and it is almost criminal to propagate it as a doctrine. Mr. Home has made Norval a true Douglas, possessing his forefathers' courage; but I have read several things, which I could not now name, which, in this unnatural distortion of character, were shamefully disgusting. Perhaps this is only saying that they were not written by such men as Home, who knows what belongs to character and what to accident.

Could not I, as a shoemaker, gather all possible accounts relating to those who have figured in the world from our trade? Was not Secretary Craggs a chip of leather? Suppose I verify the old story of Crispin? I wonder nobody has yet ridiculed me and my garret poetry: perhaps a few successful attempts would bring garrets into repute,

as they ought to be, for they have their advantages;—such as silence, air, cheapness, &c.

A few months back, one of the newspapers stated something about making all the roads in England straight! If such a thing was set about, I hope all the workmen, would meet with the same misfortune which befel the devil, while digging a ditch in Cambridgeshire—he broke his spade!

It is not good to be too silent in company.

It being insufferably hot last night, drank some ale in a public-house in the City-road, and being election-time for the county members, was taken for a government spy.

Two stanch friends of Sir Francis declared they loved his cause, and were ready and willing to fight for it; and poured forth a torrent of abuse against "*spies and collectors of seditious words.*" I came away,

and left them in their error, with the silent imputation on my head; and could not help reflecting, that if fifteen days' contention at Brentford, could warm men enough to make them fight for their cause, what is the wonder that the men of Paris (when actually murdered by hundreds) should murder again? They make or conceive a provocation, and weigh it, and act upon it, that instant! An angry man is the pest of a company; an angry company is the pest of a neighbourhood; an angry nation is a curse to the world!

LIBRARY
OF THE
BOMBAY
BRANCH
OF THE
ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY.

CRITICAL.

CRITICAL.

I NEVER could reconcile to harmony, or even common smoothness, the concluding lines of Pope's description of the death of the Duke of Buckingham, beginning,

"In the worst inn's worst room," &c.

and finishing,

"There, victor of his health, of fortune, friends,
And fame, this lord of useless thousands ends."

I have often wondered that Pope, so remarkable for harmony, should not feel a harshness here, and that——

Similes in poetry, unless excellently good, are blemishes instead of beauties. When reading Dryden's Virgil, whenever I came to an animated passage, and found the

author going to look about him to compare it with something else, I felt a vacuum, and then a kind of joy, to find he was again going on with the description, which was higher and nobler than the thing brought into comparison. I *often* feel the same; and the more strikingly sudden the digression is made, so much more reason, has the reader to expect something, to pay him for looking off.—I don't like them, or I should have used more.

Dibdin's song of "Tom Bowling" compares the trumpet, which is to rouse into animation countless myriads of creatures—a world of dust—to what? to a boatman's whistle, and consequently, the Almighty to a captain!! Now, how is it—am I superstitious—or is this really natural, and not too bad?

Coincidences.

While my Rural Tales were printing, I first got sight of Mr. Wordsworth's Ballads, and was startled to find him saying, in the "Idiot Boy,"

"That Pony's worth his weight in gold."

I had written, without seeing or dreaming of Mr. Wordsworth's remark, almost the same words in "Market Night:"

"That Beast is worth his weight in gold."

Now if unborn critics should dispute about this, as I fear they will about many such trifles, I would say (could I rise from the grave), "Mr. W. wrote and published his book first, and I had not seen it." I would beg the learned searchers after imitations and curious coincidences, to give all reasonable scope to charity, and to admit, in all cases, the kindred ideas which must exist in tracing the same subject. I have read some such speculations on other writings with disgust. RESOLVED to "write to George about it."

A large Picture by Westall, called "A Storm in Harvest."

The sheaves, whether meant for barley or wheat, are a bad crop; more straw than corn, or rather, the straw is not defined. It appears in the stem as a bundle of fine grass, and there are not ears enough (reckoning a stem to each and no more) to make a sheaf of a quarter the size.

The couple approaching from the field, on the left, are driven on violently by the storm; and yet the man and woman in the foreground are sitting *facing* the weather! The man is an Abelard—never saw a Suffolk codger like him. The old man's hand to his chin *right good.* The old woman has the best birth as to shelter; but is it not natural for men as well as beasts to turn their backs to the weather? I wish Mr. Westall had brought the waggon and horses forwarder.

I like the old man and woman best of the group, and they may be all highly credit-

able to the artist,—but to me they are not English faces.

In Mr. Westall's "Peasant Boy," I like his attitude; but his clothing, from the waist downward, is in the Bond-street cut. Such breeches and stockings were never on a peasant boy, unless they came to him at second-hand from the squire. Well done, Robin, for a critic!!

Just borrowed from Mr. Rogers the first volume of Mr. Southey's "Thalaba;" and amongst a thousand charming instances of powerful description, one strikes my mind, not from its intrinsic merit, great as it is, so much as from the similarity of the thought to what I have written in my wild mood, at page of this book, about three years ago. When I contemplated the destruction of London, I imagined, perhaps truly, that old Thames would roll on the same as if London had never been. Mr. Southey, after bringing his Arabian boy to

the ruins of Babylon, makes the following lines a part of his description:

" The wandering Arab never sets his tent
Within her walls.—The shepherd eyes afar
Her evil towers—and devious drives his flock.
Alone, unchanged, a free and bridgeless tide
Euphrates rolls along:
Eternal Nature's work!"

If my nonsense had been publicly seen—would the reader have said, I took the idea from Southey, or that he took it from me?

The conclusion—when the mind is fixed upon such contemplations, is so natural and inevitable, that if twenty persons were to reflect, and speak out their reflections, they would be all nearly alike. Every one knows that a river was prior to, and will outlast a town. The question is, can they make their reflections and descriptions, nip hold of the soul, like Southey's?

Again, on the score of coincidences.

I have long ago composed a ballad, called "Emma's Kid." Having to make, by de-

sire of Lord Buchan, a pair of shoes for his lady, the verses had some kind of reference, the shoes being made of *kid* leather. Lord Buchan had a copy, which I afterwards regretted, as I conceited that I had mended it on a second attempt; but having never liked it, it lies in my condemned regiment *.

Having a commission lately, to buy for a lady a copy of Shenstone's poems, I found there a poem called "The dying kid." The similarity surprised me, and disgusted me too. Shenstone's is a beautiful piece, and mine wants every thing which it should have; and if it had been published, the world would have said—and I doubt not that Lord Buchan *does say*—that it is an humble imitation of what in truth I had never seen! A great deal of the ill-natured and uncandid stuff which is written upon the misconceived subject of "coincidences," is little superior in wisdom to the boy's exclamation—"La, uncle! why your Essex moon is just like our Suffolk moon!"

* See vol. i.

I saw last May, for the first time in my life, the exhibition at Somerset House. In the room set apart for statuary, the most natural, and consequently the most beautiful thing in the room, was an infant on its mother's lap, making part of a monumental group by Nollikens. I noticed that every woman who approached it, put on such a look, as pleaded powerfully for their own right feelings, and for the artist. I never felt more from any work of art than from that.

The Dead Soldier.

When first I saw this picture, or rather the engraving from the picture, I was highly pleased to find so much done with so few faces, or rather with one face; for none but the infant's is seen. There is more expression in the grasp of the mother's hand, than in twenty wry faces and bloody swords. The infant, too, is like an infant, perfectly

unconscious. How abominable it is ever to represent them otherwise; and yet in that showy thing of the family leaving the deserted village, I must think this fault is obvious, and to me disgusting. Another plate, a fellow to it, has a ring of dancers, but it is not English rusticity. I know not who painted the pictures; I remember seeing them in the shop windows, and did not like them.

S. Rogers, Esq. author of the "Pleasures of Memory," has a set of drawings of children by Stothard. Nobody would find in them an unnatüral or adult stiffness of body, or a meaning or consciousness which children possess not. I never saw Mr. Stothard, but he has my sincere admiration.

Mrs. Robinson's Lyrical Tales.

The first piece, "All alone," I don't like, for these reasons: It possesses the fault of many pictures which I have noticed; more

susceptibility is given to the child than he could possess. The boy could not, nor would not, remember the *time* when he was just learning to talk, and consequently could not say,

> " I felt her breast with rapture bound,
> When first I prattled on her knee."

The *grief* of a child could not, I think, be strong enough to induce him to sleep, night after night, in a churchyard!

There seems none of these imperfections in her " Shepherd's Dog." I like it extremely. " He is not mad," is a good stroke; it has more in it than the " All alone" and the " Lascar" put together. Mrs. Robinson's delineations of nature are vivid, but I cannot think them just. I should like to see what the critics will say—or have said of them.

Wordsworth's Lyrical Ballads.

I go with pleasure and anxiety along with "Betty Fay" by moonlight: it was truly a charming night. "The Thorn," with all its simplicity, I shall never forget. "Simon Lee," "We are seven," and "The Nightingale," in their eve-like nakedness, I feel greatly pleased with. *Resolved* to read them through attentively.

I don't much relish "The Pet Lamb." The "Poet's Reverie" sounds too much like a madman's reverie. It should not be in the same book with "Michael" and "The Brothers."

Is it right to say "skies?" "The stars in the skies," &c. One charming blue covers the apparent concave over our heads. If we were whelmed under a bowl, should we say the stars in the bowls? I have used this kind of plurality of *skies* several times,

but it don't sound right to my ear, or apprehension.

Children's Books.

I never get hold of a child's book but I feel an inclination to see how the story is told, be it ever so simple. If I can judge by my girls, the minds of children are much interested by such as are well written; and it appears of much importance to have them adapted to their years, by the exclusion of words which they cannot be acquainted with:—and, surely, if that curse of beauty and loveliness—affectation, was unsparingly attacked, it would have a good effect. "Jemima Placid" is a charming thing in this way. "Virtue in a Cottage," is a most pleasing and naturally told story, written by somebody who had seen something besides the shop windows in Cheapside. I shall remember the "Dog's nose" in "Goody-two-shoes," as long as I live. My mother

read it to me and my sister, when very young, and enforced its precepts, and its excellent hits at superstition, in a manner which I shall ever esteem the greatest of her favours, and the most unquestionable proof of her love and her understanding. As soon as I can find time, I mean to try my hand at some trifle for the use of children.

* This benevolent and useful design Mr. Bloomfield executed in part by the publication of "Little Davy," in 1815, (a book which still continues popular,) and afterwards by an attempt to establish in his family, what was to be called "The Bird and Insect Post-office." The design was to instruct his own children, and others, in natural history, by a method so simple and agreeable, that I am surprised it was never thought of before. This method was to keep up a correspondence between different beasts and insects upon topics connected with their habits and supposed feelings. The correspondence was to be conducted by the junior branches of his family, who were thus engaged to impart to each other, in the form of letters, such knowledge of

animated nature as they could acquire from books or observation.

Unhappily, Mr. Bloomfield deferred this undertaking until that woful period when his health had declined—his spirits become dejected—and his circumstances involved in embarrassment and vexation.

With powers thus enfeebled, it is not wonderful that the correspondence broke off; but I think it will gratify the reader to publish, as follows, the intercourse so far as it proceeded.

EDITOR.

THE

BIRD AND INSECTS' POST-OFFICE.

PREFACE.

WE all know that Æsop has made his birds and beasts talk, and reason too; and that so well, as still to make the volume bearing his name, a favourite with thousands. Perhaps too, we all know that some French author, has objected to this method of teaching; alleging that children should not be imposed upon (or something to that effect), and led to believe in the *reality* of talking birds and beasts. To me it appears plainly that they do not, nor are they inclined to believe in any such reality. Observe two or three children at play with a favourite kitten. When one of them, in mere wantonness,

shall give the little animal a rap on the nose, or a squeeze by the tail, the owner of the cat will instantly exclaim—"Poor little pussy, she does not like that, *she says*." Now, the child knows very well that the cat did not say a word about the matter, but she looked and acted as if she had, and that was enough.

In the following pages, I have endeavoured to make my winged and creeping correspondents, talk in their own character, according to their well-known habits and pursuits.

I have added a few notes, sometimes of illustration and sometimes of inquiry; for, as natural history is almost a boundless field, I may stand in need of correction myself. It will be obvious that I have taken only some of the plainest and simplest subjects, for the purpose of trying whether any interest can be awakened in young minds by such means. And as I like to write for children, and think a great deal of information might be blended with amusement in

this way, I hold myself acquitted of the charge of trifling and puerility, and am the young reader's friend and well-wisher,

R. B.

P. S.—The letters signed C. are written, or translated, if you please, by my eldest son; together with the verses on the close of May-day, at the end of the volume.

ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY OF THE BRITISH

THE

BIRD AND INSECTS' POST-OFFICE.

LETTER I.

FROM THE MAGPIE TO THE SPARROW.

LITTLE JABBERER,

I HAVE many times thought of addressing to you a few words of advice, as you seem to stand in need of such a friend.

You know that I do not stand much upon ceremony; I am always ready for talking and for giving advice, and really

wonder how other birds can keep themselves so quiet. Then you will pardon my frankness, since you know my character, when I inform you, that I think you remarkably tame and spiritless: you have no enterprise in you. In an old farm-yard, shuffling amongst the straw, there you may be found morning, noon, and night; and you are never seen in the woods, and groves, with me and my companions, where we have the blessing of free liberty, and fly where we please. You must often have heard me sing; that cannot be doubted, because I am heard a great way. As to me, I never come down to your farm, unless I think I can find a hen's egg or two amongst the nettles, or a chicken or duck just hatched.

I earnestly advise you to change your manner of life, and take a little free air, as I do. Stop no longer in your dull yard, feeding upon pigs' leavings, but come abroad with me.—But I must have done, till a better opportunity; for the game-keeper with his gun has just turned the

corner. Take my advice, and you may be as well off, and learn to sing as well as I do.

Yours, in great haste,

MAG.

LETTER II.

THE SPARROW'S REPLY.

OLD MAG. (I won't say neighbour),

I was hopping along the top ridge of the house when I received your insolent and conceited epistle, which does you no credit, but is very much in your usual style. "Little Jabberer," indeed! and pray, what is your letter of advice? Nothing but jabber from beginning to end. You *sing*, you say. I have heard you often enough: but if yours is singing, then I must be allowed to be no judge of the matter. You say you are afraid of the game-

keeper; this, perhaps, shows some sense in you; for he is paid for killing all kinds of vermin.

And so you come down to our farm when you think you can steal something! Thus, if I did not hide my eggs, and my young ones, in a hole too small for you to enter, I can see pretty plainly, how I should come off with your thieving and your advice.

Be advised in *your* turn: keep away from our yard; for my master has a gun too; and your chattering, which I suppose you call singing, he abominably hates. You will be in danger of catching what the game-keeper threatens, and then where is the great difference between your station and mine?

From my lodging under the thatch of the stable, I am, as you may happen to behave yourself,

Yours, at a convenient distance,

&c. &c.

LETTER III.

FROM A YOUNG GARDEN SPIDER TO HER MOTHER.

DEAR MOTHER,

I CANNOT exactly tell what happened before I came out of the shell; but, from circumstances, I can give you some information. When I came to life, amongst some scores of other little merry yellow creatures, I found myself, and all of us, enclosed in a thing, through which we with our eight eyes could see very well, but could not instantly get out. I soon perceived that we, in the egg state, wrapped in a white bag, as you left us, had been put into a thing called a bottle, by one of those great creatures, whom we always call *striders;* but this was a particular one of that tribe, who wanted to play tricks with us—one whom

they would perhaps call a philosopher*. Well, his own sense (if he had any) told him that we could not live without air; so he left the cork out, and went about his business; no doubt, of much less consequence than the lives of all us prisoners—but that they do not mind. But how long were we prisoners? Why, as soon as ever we were out of the shell, we began to spin, and linked our webs so thick together, that the philosopher's bottle would hold us no longer. We climbed out in a crowd, and spread our webs over the room, up to the very ceiling. I shall never forget how the great booby stared, when he saw us all climbing up our own rope-ladders! I wonder if those great creatures are not sometimes caught in webs spun by their fellow-creatures, and whether they are not sometimes put by hundreds into a bottle, without possessing any means

* This part of the letter is very difficult of translation, as the plain word, in spider's language, means merely "a deep one."

of escape? But I am but a child, and must live and learn before I talk more freely.

Long life to you, dear mother, and plenty of flies.

Yours ever, &c.

LETTER IV.

FROM A YOUNG NIGHTINGALE TO A WREN.

Dated "Home Wood."

NEIGHBOUR,

WHEN we last met, you seemed very lively and agreeable, but you asked an abundance of questions, and particularly wanted to know whether we nightingales really do, as is said of us, cross the great water every year, and return in the spring to sing in your English groves. Now, as I am but young, I must be modest, and not prate about what I cannot as yet understand. I must say, nevertheless, that I never heard

my parents talk of any particular long journey which they had performed to reach this country, or that they should return, and take me, and the rest of the family with them, at any particular time or season. I know this, that I never saw my parents fly further at one flight, than from one side of a field to another, or from one grove to the next. Who are they who call us "birds of passage *?" They certainly may know more of

* COWPER, that excellent man and poet, and close observer of nature, writes as follows to his friend, on the 11th of March, 1792.

"*To John Johnson, Esq.*

"You talk of primroses that you pulled on Candlemas-day, but what think you of me, who heard a nightingale on New Year's day? Perhaps I am the only man in England who can boast of such good fortune. Good indeed! for if it was at all an omen, it could not be an unfavourable one. The winter, however, is now making himself amends, and seems the more peevish for having been encroached on at so undue a season. Nothing less

the extent of the GREAT WATERS than we can, neighbour Wren, but have they con-

than a large slice out of the spring will satisfy him."

He adds the following lines on the occasion:

"*To the Nightingale, which the Author heard sing on New Year's-day*, 1792.

"Whence is it that amazed I hear
From yonder wither'd spray,
This foremost morn of all the year,
The melody of May?

And why, since thousands would be proud
Of such a favour shown,
Am I selected from the crowd,
To witness it alone?

Sing'st thou, sweet Philomel, to me,
For that I also long
Have practis'd in the groves like thee,
Though not like thee in song?

Or, sing'st thou rather under force
Of some divine command,
Commission'd to presage a course
Of happier days at hand?

sidered our powers, and the probability of what they assert? I am sure, if my parents should call on me to go with them, I shall be flurried out of my life. But it is my business to obey. I have so lately got my feathers, that I cannot be a proper judge of the matter. As to the swallows and many other birds going to a vast distance, there is no wonder in that, if you look at their wings; but how would you, for instance, perform such a journey; you, who seem to be in a constant agitation and flutter; you, who even when you sing, put yourself into a violent passion, as if you had not a minute to live? *We* nightingales are the birds for song! This you will acknowledge, I dare

Thrice welcome, then! for many a long
And joyless year have I,
As thou to-day, put forth my song
Beneath a wintry sky.

But thee no wintry skies can harm,
Who only need'st to sing
To make e'en January charm,
And every season Spring.

say, though I have not began yet. I will give you a specimen when I come back (if I am really to go), and you will hear me in "*Home Wood*" when it is dark, and you have crept into your little nest in the hovel.

Believe me, I have a great respect for you, and am your young friend,

THIRD-IN-THE-NEST.

LETTER V.

FROM AN EARWIG, DEPLORING THE LOSS OF ALL HER CHILDREN.

DEAR AUNT,

You cannot think how distressed I have been, and still am; for, under the bark of a large elm, which, I dare say, has stood there a great while, I had placed my whole family, where they were dry, comfortable, and, as I foolishly thought, secure.

But only mark what calamities may fall upon earwigs before they are aware of them! I had just got my family about me, all white, clean, and promising children, when pounce came down that bird they call a wood-pecker; when, thrusting his huge beak under the bark where we lay, down went our whole sheltering roof! and my children, poor things, running, as they thought, from danger, were devoured as fast as the destroyer could open his beak and shut it. For my own part, I crept into a crack in the solid tree, where I have thus far escaped: but as this bird can make large holes into solid timber, I am by no means safe.

This calamity is the more heavy, as it carries with it a great disappointment; for very near our habitation was a high wall, the sunny side of which was covered with the most delicious fruits; peaches, apricots, nectarines, &c. all just then ripening; and I thought of having such a feast with my children as I had never enjoyed in my life.

I am surrounded by wood-peckers, jack-

daws, magpies, and other devouring creatures, and think myself very unfortunate. Yet, perhaps, if I could know the situation of some larger creatures—I mean particularly such as would tread me to death if I crossed their path—they may have complaints to make, as well as I.

Take care of yourself, my good old aunt, and I shall keep in my hiding-place as long as starvation will permit. And, after all, perhaps the fruit was not so delicious as it looked—I am resolved to think so, just to comfort myself.

Yours, with compliments, as usual.

LETTER VI.

FROM THE WILD DUCK TO THE TAME DUCK.

Dated Lincoln and Ely Fens.

DEAR COUSIN,

I SUPPOSE I must call you so; though I declare I know not how we are related. But though I am thought so very wild and shy, I have still a kind of fellow-feeling for you; and, if you are not gone to the spit before this comes to you, I should be glad of your reply in a friendly way. You know very well that you are intended to be eaten, and so are we—when they can catch us. I understand that you never fly, and that you seldom waddle above a meadow's length from your pond, where you keep puddling and groping from day-light till dark. This, I assure you, is not the life that I lead. We fly together in vast numbers in the night, for many miles, over this flat, wet country: so, as to water,

we have an inexhaustible store; we may swim ourselves tired. But, I dare say, every station of our duck-lives is subject to some disadvantages and some calamities. Thus, with all our wildness, we are not secure; for we are taken sometimes by hundreds in a kind of trap, which is called a decoy*.

Some of our tribe have been made tame like you (but I hope *you* are not so false-

* "*Bedford Level*, a track of fens consisting of 300,000 acres, in the counties of Norfolk, Suffolk, Huntingdon, Northampton, Lincoln, Cambridge, and the Isle of Ely, which appears to have been dry land formerly, by the ruins of houses, large trees, &c. that have been found in several parts. After divers expensive attempts to drain these fens in the reign of Henry VI. and Charles I., William, duke of Bedford, and others, in 1649, undertook and completed it, so far as to bring about 100,000 acres of good land into use. In these fens are several decoys, where astonishing quantities of wild-fowl are taken during the season. One of these, not far from Ely, generally sends 3000 couple weekly to London, and is let for 500*l.* a year."

See Walker's Gazetteer, article 'Bedford Level.'

hearted), and then their masters feed them plentifully, in a place contrived on purpose, with a narrow entrance, with which these *traitor ducks* are well acquainted, so that they can pass in and out at a place which we strangers should never have thought of. They are sent out in the dusk of the evening, when they soon join with large companies of us strangers; and knowing, as they do, their way home, and that they shall find food, they set off, close at each other's tails, along a ditch or water-course, and we fools follow them.

The entrance, as far as I could see of it, is very narrow; for I have been *twice* within a hair's breadth of being caught, and do not pretend to know all about it; but I wish heartily, that every duck and drake in the country—ay, and every one of our allies, the geese, too, could say as much; could say that "they had twice been on the verge of destruction, by keeping bad company, but had escaped."

What becomes of my companions, when

taken, I think I have heard pretty accurately; for there is somewhere, a very large assemblage of fellow-creatures to those, who catch us, and whose demand seems never to be satisfied. Well, never mind, cousin; I am determined to fly and swim too, as long as I can, and I advise you to do the same, and make the most of your day.

Hoping to hear from you, I am affectionately your wild cousin.

LETTER VII.

THE TAME DUCK'S REPLY.

COUSIN WILDING,

I CONFESS I did not at all expect to hear from you; for I always believed you to be one of those thoughtless young creatures which are to be found in other stations of life, as well as in yours and mine, who, as soon as they get fledged, and able to get

abroad, care no more for their parents, and those who brought them up, than I care for a shower of rain. However, you have escaped danger *twice*, and you have reason to congratulate yourself. I have been sitting here upon ten eggs for three weeks past, and, of course, have another week to be confined; but then the thoughts of the pleasure I shall have in hatching and guiding my young ones to the water, is ample payment for all my pains. They will look so clean and so delighted, and will do as they are bid by the smallest quack that I can utter, that I must be a bad mother indeed if I am not proud of them. Perhaps you will wonder when I tell you that we have a creature here—fledged indeed—which is called a hen; a strange, cackling, flying, useless, noisy, silly creature, which is as much afraid of water as you are of your decoy. I have often known one of these birds to hatch nine or ten of my eggs; and then if you wanted to ridicule the lifted foot of conceit, and the dignity of assumed importance, you should

see her lead her young, or more properly, see the young lead her to the nearest water they can find. In they go, and she begins to call and scold, and run round the edge to save them from drowning! Now, what fools these hens must be compared to us ducks! at least, I, for one, am determined to think so. I have seen this same hen with the brood about her, scratching in our farm-yard with all her might; when, not considering who was behind her, or who under her feathers, she has kicked away one little yellow duck with one of her claws, and another with the other, till I wished I had her in a pond; I would have given her a good sousing, depend upon it. But really, cousin, don't you think that this way of contradicting our natures and propensities, is very wrong? Suppose, for instance, I should set upon a dozen of that silly creature's eggs which I mentioned above—for I will never consent to have them matched with us—I should then, to be sure, have a week's holiday, as they sit but three weeks: but

what should I bring to light? a parcel of little, useless, tip-toed, cowardly things, that would not follow me into the pond—I cannot bear to think of it. I have written you a long letter, and can think of no more but quack! quack! quack! and farewell.

LETTER VIII.

FROM THE GANDER TO THE TURKEY-COCK

Old friend, you certainly have merit;
You really are a bird of spirit!
I 'm quite surprised, I must confess;
I did not think you did possess
Such valour as you 've lately shown—
In fact, 'tis nearly like my own.
You know I 've always been renown'd
For bravery, since first I found
That I could hiss; and feel I 'm bolder
Each year that I am growing older.

* By Charles Bloomfield, eldest son of the deceased.

You must, I 'm sure, have often seen,
When in the pond, or on the green,
With all my family about me,
(I can't think how they 'd do without me),
Some human thing come striding by,
And how, without a scruple, I
March after him and bite his heel;
And then, you know, the pride I feel
To hear, as back I march again,
The feat extoll'd by all my train.
But if I were to tell you all
The valiant actions, great and small,
That ever were achieved by me,
I never should have done, I see;
For cows, and pigs, and horses know
The consequence of such a foe.
However, I am glad to find
That *you* have such a noble mind,
And think, my friend, that by and by
You 'll rise to be as great as I.

Your old friend,

HISS.

LETTER IX.

THE DUNGHILL COCK TO THE CHAFFINCH.

I HAVE often, during the spring and summer, heard you of a morning piping away in the hedges, sometimes as soon as I was up myself, and thought your singing pretty fair, and that you conducted yourself as you ought to do. But this I cannot say lately; for it is quite overstepping the bounds of decency and good manners, when you and your brother pilferers, now the winter is come, make it your daily practice to come by scores, as you do, into our yard, and without any ceremony eat up all the barley you can lay your beaks to. I suppose when the spring comes again, and you find more to satisfy you outside a farm-yard than within, you will be off to the hedges again. I shall let you alone, unless the barley runs short, which is to support my wives and children; when, if you still ven-

ture to continue your pilferings, you must not be surprised should some of you feel the weight of my displeasure.

I must go after my family, who are all out of my sight since I have been writing this.

Yours, in haste, and a friend if possible,

CHANTICLEER.

LETTER X.

THE BLUE-BOTTLE FLY TO THE GRASS-HOPPER*.

As I roam'd t'other day,
Neighbour Hop, in my way
I discover'd a nice rotten plum,
Which you know is a treat;
And, to taste of the sweet,
A swarm of relations had come.

* By C. Bloofimeld.

So we all settled round,
As it lay on the ground,
And were feasting ourselves with delight;
But, for want of more thought
To have watch'd, as we ought,
We were suddenly seized—and held tight

In a *human's* clench'd hand,
Where, unable to stand,
We were twisted and tumbled about;
But perceiving a chink,
You will readily think
I exerted myself—I got out.

How the rest got away
I really can't say,
But I flew with such ardour and glee,
That again, unawares,
I got into the snares
Of my foe, Mr. Spider, you see;

Who so fiercely came out
Of his hole, that no doubt
He expected that I was secure:
But he found 'twould not do,
For I forced my way through,
Overjoy'd on escaping, you're sure.

But I'll now take my leave,
For the clouds, I perceive,
Are darkening over the sky;
The sun is gone in,
And I really begin
To feel it grow cooler—Good bye!
I'm, as ever, yours—Blue-bottle Fly.

LETTER XI.

THE GLOW-WORM TO THE HUMBLE-BEE*.

Excuse, Mr. Bee, this epistle, to one
Whose time, from the earliest gleam of the sun
Till he sinks in the west, is so busily spent;
That I fear I intrude;—but I write with intent
To save your whole city from pillage and ruin,
And to warn you in time of a plot that is brewing.
Last night, when, as usual, enjoying the hour
When the gloaming had spread, and a trickling
shower

* By C. Bloomfield.

Was beading the grass as it silently fell,
And day with reluctance was bidding farewell;
When down by yon hedge, nearly opposite you,
And your City of Honey, as proudly I threw
The rays from my lamp in a magical round;
I listen'd, alarm'd upon hearing the sound
Of human intruders approaching more near;
But I presently found *I* had nothing to fear,
For the hedge was between us, and I and my gleam
Lay hid from their view: when the following scheme
I heard, as they shelter'd beneath the old tree,
And send you each creature's own words, Mr. Bee:—
"See, Jack, there it is; now suppose you and I,
"With a spade and some brimstone, should each of us try
"Some night, when we're sure all the bees are at rest,
"To smother them all, and then dig out the nest?"
—"I know we can do it," said Jack with delight;
"I can't come to-morrow; but s'pose the next night

" We both set about it,-if you are inclined;
" And then we'll halve all the honey we find."—
" Agreed," said the other, " but let us begone."—
And they left me in thought until early this morn;
When I certainly meant, if your worship had staid
But a minute or two, till my speech I had made,
To have saved you the reading, as well as the cost
Of a letter by post—but my words were all lost.—
For though they were lavish'd each time you came
near,
Or was close over head, and I thought you
should hear;
Yet the buzz of importance, as onward you flew,
Bobbing into each flower the whole meadow
through,
So baffled your brains that I let you alone,
For I found, that I might as well speak to a drone;
Yet, rather than quietly leave you to fate,
(Such a villanous thought never enter'd my
pate),
I send you this letter, composed by the light
Of my silvery lamp in the dead of the night,
And about the same time, and the very same
place,
That, a few nights ago, when the moon hid her
face,

I beheld, nearly hid in the grass as I lay,
And my lamp in full splendour reflecting its ray
In the eye of each dew-drop, the Fairies unseen
To all human vision, trip here with their Queen
To pay me a visit, to dance and to feast;
And their revels continued, till full in the east,
The sun tinged the clouds for another bright day,
When each took the warning, and bounded away;
'Tis the same at this moment:—farewell, Mr. Hum,
I 've extinguish'd my lamp, for the morning is come.

SPANGLE.

LETTER XII.

FROM THE PIGEON TO THE PARTRIDGE.

WHAT a long time it is since I received your kind letter about the ripening corn, and the dangers you were presently to be subject to, with all your children. You will think me very idle, or very unfeeling,

if I delay answering you any longer; I will therefore tell you some of my own troubles, to convince you, that I have had causes of delay, which you can have no notion of until I explain them. You must know, then, that we are subject to more than the random gun-shot in the field, for we are sometimes taken out of our house a hundred at a time, and put into a large basket to be placed in a meadow, or spare plat of ground suiting the purpose, there to be murdered at leisure. This they call "shooting from the trap*," and is done in this way. We being imprisoned, as I have said, as thick as we can stand in the basket, a man

* I once witnessed this silly and barbarous sport; and saw at least a score of maimed and wounded birds upon the barns, and stables, and outhouses of the village. I was utterly disgusted, and it required a strong effort of the mind, to avoid wishing that one of the gunners, at least, had hobbled off the ground with a dangling leg, which might for one half year have reminded him, of the cowardly practice of "*shooting from the trap.*"

is placed by us, to take us out *singly*, and carry us to a small box, at the distance of fifty or sixty yards; this box has a lid, to which is attached a string, by means of which, he, the man (if he is a man), can draw up the lid, and let us fly at a signal given. Every sensible pigeon of course flies for his life, for, ranged on each side, stand from two to four or six men with guns, who fire as the bird gets upon the wing; and the cleverest fellows are those, who can kill most; —and this they call *sport!* I have sad cause to know how this sport is conducted, for I have been in the trap myself. Only one man, or perhaps a boy fired at me as I rose; but I received two wounds, for one shot passed through my crop, but I was astonished to find how soon it got well; the other broke my leg just below the feathers. O what anguish I suffered for two months, —at the end of which time it withered and dropped off. So now instead of running about amongst my red-legged brethren, as a pigeon ought, I am obliged to hop like a

sparrow. But only consider what glory this stripling must have acquired, to have actually fired a gun, and broke a pigeon's leg!! Well, we both know, neighbour Partridge, what the Hawk is; he stands for no law, nor no season, but eats us when he is hungry. He is a perfect gentleman compared to these "Lords of the Creation," as I am told they call themselves; and I declare to you upon the honour of a pigeon, that I had much rather be torn to pieces by the Hawk than be shut up in a box at a convenient distance to be shot at by a dastard. You partridges are protected during great part of the year by severe laws, but whether such laws are wise, merciful, or just, I cannot determine, but I know that they are strictly kept, and enforced by those who make them. Take care of yourself, for the harvest is almost ripe.

I am your faithful

ONE-LEGGED FRIEND AT THE GRANGE.

LETTER XIII.

THE WOOD-PIGEON TO THE OWL.

MY GOOD, OLD, WISE, SECLUDED, AND QUIET FRIEND,

I WRITE to you in the fulness of my heart, for I have been grossly insulted by the Magpie, in a letter received this morning; in which, I am abused for what my forefathers did long before I was born. I know of nothing more base, or more unjust, than thus raking up old quarrels *, and reproach-

* The poor pigeon, I think, must here allude to the old well-known quarrel between the two families, about building their nests. The magpie once undertook to teach the pigeon how to build a more substantial and commodious dwelling, and certainly it would have become the learner to have observed her progress, and not interrupt the teacher; but the pigeon kept on her usual cry, "take two, taffy, take two," (for thus it is translated in Suffolk), but

ing those who had nothing to do with them. The letter must have come through your office, but I know you have not the authority to break open and examine letters, passing between those who should be friends, I

Mag insisted this was wrong, and that one stick at a time was quite enough; still the pigeon kept on her cry, "take two, take two," until the teacher in a violent passion gave up the undertaking, exclaiming, "I say that one at a time is plenty, and if you think otherwise, you may set about the work yourself, for I will have no more to do with it." Since that time the wood-pigeon has built a wretched nest sure enough, so thin that you may frequently see her two eggs through it, and if not placed near the body of a tree, or on strong branches, it is often thrown down by the wind, or the eggs rolled out; yet the young of this bird, before they are half grown, will defend themselves against any intruder, at which time the parent bird will dash herself down amongst the standing corn, or high grass, and behave, as though her wings were broken, and she was utterly disabled; and this she does to draw off the enemy from her young; so that this bird is not so foolish as Mag would make us believe.

therefore do not accuse you; but sometimes the heart is relieved by stating its troubles, even when no redress can be expected. I know that you cannot bring to punishment that slanderer, that babbler of the woods, any more than I can; but I wish you would give me a word of comfort, if it is ever so short.

From the plantation of firs,
near the forest side,

WOOD-PIGEON.

LETTER XIV.

THE OWL IN REPLY TO THE WOOD-PIGEON.

DISTRESSED NEIGHBOUR,

I AM sorry for your trouble, but cheer up your spirits, and though you are insulted, remember who it is that gives the affront, it is only the magpie; and depend upon it,

that in general, the best way to deal with impudent fools is to be silent, and take no notice of them. I should have enough to do, if I were to resent all her impertinences. She will come sometimes round the ivy where I lodge in the old elm, or into the tower on the top of the hill; and there she will pimp and pry into my private concerns, and mob me, and call me "old Wigsby," and "doctor Winkum," and such kind of names, and all for nothing. I assure you it is well for her, that she is not a mouse, or she should not long escape my talons: but whoever heard of such a thing as eating a magpie? I live chiefly on mice (when I am at liberty to catch them), but I have my complaints to make, as well as you, for you know I hold a high situation in the post-office, and I suppose you know, likewise, that the letters are brought in so very late, that it often takes me half the night to sort them, and night is the very time when I ought to get my own food! At this rate of going on, and if the cats are industrious

as usual, there will not be a mouse left for me, if I do not give up my place.

I have heard that my family are famed for wisdom; but for my part, I will not boast of any such thing: yet I am wise enough to know, that other people in high offices expect either a good salary or perquisites, as a reward for their labour, or what is easier still, somebody to do all the work for them. If I hold in my present mind until next quarter, I will certainly send in my resignation. Thus you see what an important thing it is to suit the office to the person, or the person to the office on whom it is conferred; for had the magpie, for instance, been secretary, every one of the letters would have been peeped into, for a certainty, for nothing can escape her curiosity. I will try to bear with my situation a little longer, and believe me to be,

Your true friend,

SECRETARY TO THE

BOARD OF MANAGERS.

LETTER XV.

FROM A SWALLOW IN THE SOUTH OF FRANCE TO AN ENGLISH ROBIN.

DEAR LITTLE BOB,

I REMEMBER your peaceful singing on the top of your shed, near my late dwelling, and I remember, also, that I promised to write you some account of my journey. You may recollect, that at the close of your summer, when flies become scarce, we all assembled on a sunny morning, on the roof of the highest building in the village, and talked loudly of the flight we intended to take. At last came the day appointed, and we mounted up in a vast body and steered southward. Being hatched in England, I had thought your valleys and streams matchless in beauty; and for any thing I know to the contrary, they certainly are; but I am now a traveller, and have a

traveller's privilege to say what I like. When we reached the great water, I was astonished at its width, but more still to see many travelling houses going at a prodigious rate, and sending forth from iron chimneys columns of black smoke over the face of the water, reaching further than you ever flew in your life; they have a contrivance on each side which puts the waves all in commotion, but they are not wings. My mother says that in old times, when swallows came to England, there were no such things to be seen. We crossed this water, and a fine sunny country beyond it, until I was tired, and we now found flies more abundant, though the oldest amongst us assure me, that we must travel further still, over another wide water, into a country where men's faces are of the same colour as my feathers, black and tawny; but travellers see strange things. When I come to England again, I will endeavour to find out your village. I hope, for your sake, you may have a mild winter and good lodgings.

This is all the news worth sending, and I must catch flies for myself now, you know.

So farewell,
for I am in haste *.

ON HEARING THE CUCKOO AT MIDNIGHT, MAY 1ST, 1822.

BY CHARLES BLOOMFIELD.

'Twas the blush of the spring, vegetation was young,
And the birds with a maddening ecstasy sung

---

* It is much to be wished that the above letter had contained some information on a very curious subject, for I would rather believe the swallow himself, than many tales told of them. It has been said, that instead of flying to southern countries, where they can find food and a congenial climate, they dive into the waters of a bog, and lie in a torpid state, through the winter, round the roots of flags and weeds.

R. BLOOMFIELD.

To welcome a season so lovely and gay—
But a scene the most sweet, was the close of
May-day.

For the air was serene, and the moon was out
bright,
And Philomel boldly exerted her might
In her swellings and trillings, to rival the sound
Of the distant defiance of Nightingales round.

While the Cuckoo as proudly was heard to
prolong,
Though day-light was over, his own mellow song,
And appeared to exult; and at intervals, too,
The Owl in the distance join'd in with "Too-
whoo."

Unceasing, unwearied, each, proud of his power,
Continued the contest from hour to hour;
The Nightingale vaunting—the Owl in reply—
With the Cuckoo's response—till the moon
from the sky

Was hastening down to the west, and the dawn
Was spreading the east; and the Owl in the
morn

Sat silently winking his eyes at the sight;
And the Nightingale also had bidden "good-
night."

The Cuckoo, left solus, continued with glee,
His notes of defeat from his favourite tree;—
At length *he* departed; but still as he flew,
Was heard his last notes of defiance, "Cuckoo."

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX.

MANY erroneous accounts having appeared in print, respecting the melancholy close of poor Bloomfield's days; I feel it a duty to anticipate future designs so far, as is necessary to remove the wrong impressions thus made, by the following statement of facts.

The health of Mr. Bloomfield, which had always been delicate, declined rapidly through the last five years of his life. His general debility was aggravated by very painful and almost constant head-achs, which nearly deprived him of sight.

He had made several ineffectual attempts to place some of his children in situations where they could maintain themselves; but owing in part to their ill health, and in part to a constitutional timidity, which seems to characterise the whole family of the Bloomfields, he succeeded with only one.

During the last nine years, his regular income (exclusive of a few trifling presents) did not average one hundred pounds per annum, and upon this

income, five weakly persons had to subsist, exclusive of the youth, mentioned at the end of my preface.

It cannot, therefore, excite much surprise if this income proved insufficient, or that he was unable to clear accounts with his creditors, as he had formerly done. This, however, was the most painful circumstance of all, for he had so great a dread of being treated with incivility, as actually to abstain from the exercise necessary to his health, lest in his rambles he might encounter the altered looks, or be annoyed by the importunity of his creditors *.

In this dilemma he applied for assistance to a few of his friends †—and those who have tried this experiment, will readily judge with what success:—some noble exceptions, however, there were to the general rule; to whom full justice shall be done in due time, and place.

At length, as a last resource, he resolved to sell his cottage at Honington, the paternal estate in which he was born, and endeared to the whole

* It is proper to add, that his creditors in general behaved with kindness, and with great respect to his feelings. Ed.

† I have reason to believe that had Bloomfield's extremity been *fully known* to his friends, many among them would have been glad to extricate him; but having met with one or two rebuffs, the dignity of conscious merit became alarmed, and not wishing to incur obligations which would fall short of complete extrication—and relying on the produce of a work he had in hand, he omitted to make this appeal where, perhaps, it would have been most availing.

family by many a tender recollection. The sale was effected; but certain objections arising on the part of the purchaser, as to the validity of the title, he found himself involved in new vexations, and in point of fact, never received one sixpence of the money.

These accumulating misfortunes, at length depressed his spirits so much, that about six months before his death, he began to complain of great confusion of memory, and felt as if his understanding was entangled. He actually wrote to Bury to certify himself as to the existence of his brother George; of which fact he could not be satisfied by any other means.

About three weeks before his death, this hallucination had so much increased, as to leave but few intervals of perfect recollection. He was not, however, "for years," nor even *at all*, in such a state as to "render his death consolatory to his connexions," as some have unkindly affirmed. This event, on the contrary, is in every way a most calamitous circumstance to his family—and to his friends will long remain a subject of inconsolable regret. Mr. Bloomfield died at Shefford, in Bedfordshire, on Tuesday August 19th, 1823, in the 57th year of his age.

The following extracts of correspondence, will explain some other matters which may interest the public in favour of the family.

MISS BLOOMFIELD TO MR. WESTON.

Shefford, Jan. 6, 1824.

DEAR SIR,

If you are not still at Windsor, I am doubtful whether this may reach you, otherwise I should trouble you with a much longer letter; and, if I had not since my reply to Miss Weston, been misled by a report, that you were coming to spend Christmas with your friends, I should have written again, while I might have been sure of finding you at Windsor. Having obtained your address, my purpose in writing now, is, to request a reply to this, and (if you have leisure) attention to what I mean to say immediately on receiving your reply. It will be, as you already suppose, all about matters which concern ourselves, on which I feel your opinion will be valuable. I will not apologize to you for the trouble I give, because I believe your friendship for my father will make you think lightly of that, and because I trust you will believe, that I would try to avoid giving more than was necessary. With my love to Miss Weston, and best wishes for the happiness of both,

I remain yours,

HANNAH BLOOMFIELD.

To Mr. Weston,
Windsor.

MR. WESTON TO MISS BLOOMFIELD.

Windsor, Jan. 15, 1824.

DEAR MISS BLOOMFIELD,

I am extremely sorry you did not let me know your wishes, when you wrote last, as I was then fully prepared for a journey to Shefford; and it would have given me great pleasure to assist you, as far as lay in my power: but having concluded from your last letter that you did not need my assistance, I have made arrangements for going immediately down to the southern coast, and proceeding by the western into Scotland; which arrangements, I cannot alter, without more inconvenience to myself, than any counsel I could give, is likely to be serviceable to you. If, however, the matters to which you allude, can be safely trusted in a letter, either now or henceforth, they will at all times have my best and most serious attention.

If you think it useful to write to me, within a fortnight from the present date, direct to me at the post-office, Portsmouth. Wishing you health and happiness, I remain

Your humble servant,

JOSEPH WESTON.

To Miss Bloomfield,
Shefford.

MISS WESTON TO MISS BLOOMFIELD.

New Inn, Ventnor, Isle of Wight,
Feb. 23, 1824.

MY DEAR MISS BLOOMFIELD,

Before I begin to gossip, allow me to discharge a commission of my brother's. He desires me to inform you that he has received no letter from you since the one dated January 6th, addressed to him at Windsor; that it is his intention to be in London about the end of March, and if he can render you any service in London, or at Shefford, he will be very happy to do so. If you think he can assist you in any way, it will be necessary for you to write immediately, as we leave this place the beginning of next week. In the mean time, he hopes you will forward the business as much as lies in your power, should it be of a nature to admit of preparation.

Yours truly,
SARAH WESTON.

To Miss Bloomfield,
Shefford.

MISS BLOOMFIELD TO MISS WESTON.

Shefford, March 3, 1824.

MY DEAR MISS WESTON,

Your most welcome, friendly letter, I received on the 26th ult., but have not been able to reply till now. I had severely censured myself for having foolishly lost the council of your brother, and perhaps offended both him and you by my conduct; which (though far from being felt by me) might, I feared, be misconstrued into indifference to his advice, and I much doubted whether I should hear any more from you, at least, for many months. This painful state of feeling was instantly relieved on seeing a Westonian hand-writing * * * * * * * But now for our perplexing concerns. I have had an intention of going to London shortly, to consult what friends I might find, on what is best to be done. I now think of being there in a fortnight—to stay a fortnight—and I regard as a smile which fortune has been rather sparing of, the chance I shall have of seeing Mr. Weston there; when, from what I shall have to say, and from what I shall now endeavour to say, he may perhaps be able to judge whether he can render us any service by coming to Shefford, as he again kindly offers to do. I am afraid he is not prepared to find matters so cloudy as they are with

us. The booksellers' calculations are, I fear, incorrect—that is, they are too favourable respecting our future income. From an examination of their accounts delivered to my father for nine years past, our average income from their sales has not reached 60*l.* a year.

There is now not the slightest ground for hoping we ever shall obtain a farthing from the cottage at Honington. The utmost value, I fear, of our household property and books, is not above 70*l.*; and the gross amount of debts to nearly the present time, is rather more than 200*l.* Our booksellers, Messrs. Baldwin and Co. have been so kind as to advance 50*l.* which anticipates nearly a year's income. Out of this sum we have made some payments (in which it seems we have done wrong), but we *have been,* and *still are* unavoidably increasing our own debts. This being the case, it is a question whether we can pay the debts, and start to get a living without selling the half copyright. I have not room, or I would send a statement of the whole puzzle.

Yours affectionately,

HANNAH BLOOMFIELD.

MISS WESTON TO MISS BLOOMFIELD.

West Cowes, March 10, 1824.

MY DEAR MISS BLOOMFIELD,

I received your letter in answer to mine yesterday the 9th inst. It gave me great pleasure to hear of your own health, and that of the rest of the family. I sincerely hope that the clouds which have so long hung over you will shortly clear away, and open brighter prospects on you all. You will excuse me.—I am still a woman of business, and must despatch what I am charged with first, that the useful part of my letter may be ready for post, happen what may. If, after that, I have time to gossip with you, even on paper, it will be a renewal of my enjoyments: but I hope, ere long, we shall be tête-à-tête. My brother requests me to assure you, that he was not at all offended that you did not follow his counsel; though he still thinks it is to be regretted that you did not, for he is persuaded that on many accounts the creditors would have agreed to an arrangement, which might have saved the half-copyrights; an object highly desirable for the family. He says that if you can conveniently remain in London till the 6th or 8th of April, he will see you there, and meet Mr. B——, if you think it useful to do so. If this ar-

rangement meets your approbation, he wishes you to bring to town, all his letters to you, on the present subject, as they contain particulars which have escaped his memory, and which would be useful to refer to. He also wishes you to write to Mr. Bristow, Park-street, Windsor, and say to him what you will do, and when you will be in town, and whether you can remain there till the time proposed, and whether Mr. B—— is a London gentleman, and easily met with. My brother is in constant correspondence with Mr. Bristow, and he will forward the contents of your letter to us. We shall now change our abode so often, that it would be a restraint on our movements to direct you to write to us.

Believe me to remain yours sincerely,

SARAH WESTON.

MR. WESTON TO MISS BLOOMFIELD.

Windsor, April 10, 1824.

DEAR MISS BLOOMFIELD,

On my return yesterday I called at Messrs. Baldwin's and Co., but as the principals had all

left the warehouse, I could not obtain the desired interview.

I have therefore addressed the enclosed letter to Mr. Baldwin, for the purpose of explaining the objects I mentioned to you, and which, if you think proper, you can show to Mr. B., or any other friend whose opinion you value, previous to sending it to Mr. Baldwin.

I must again repeat to you, that your following my advice with respect to these arrangements, involves the necessity of depending exclusively on your own personal exertions for support during the next two years; as by these arrangements, the income derivable from your booksellers will be anticipated for that period at least; but that this appears to me the only way of saving the half-copyrights for the future benefit of the family, and that the attainment of this object may exempt you from the penalty of suffering privations for many years, instead of only a few.

Mrs. Bloomfield's entire concurrence will of course be required, *in writing*, previous to any actual proceedings.

When these preliminaries are settled, I shall be glad to hear from you on the subject.

Perhaps it would be better if you carried my letter to Mr. Baldwin yourself—you could then learn his opinion on the subject; and obtain from

him any explanations of which you stand in need. Mr. Harvey, also, in the firm of Darton and Harvey, would be a useful person to consult, if you think it desirable.

After all, I must beg to add, that though the advice I have given is the best I am able to give, it will in no degree offend me, should you prefer your own opinion, or that of any other friend to the family, as I only wish to see you all placed in the most comfortable condition which your present circumstances will allow. My sister joins me in kind wishes.

Dear Miss Bloomfield,

Yours, &c.

JOSEPH WESTON.

P. S. I have read Mr. B.'s letter attentively. If I comprehend his meaning, I think the view he has taken of your affairs both incorrect and gloomy. I think also, you ought to consider well, and obtain the best advice you can get, before you consent to sacrifice the half-copyrights for temporary advantages.

I will return Mr. B.'s letter when I write next.

MISS BLOOMFIELD TO MR. WESTON.

12, *Providence-row, Finsbury-square, April* 17, 1824.

DEAR SIR,

I received your letter last Monday, and carried to the booksellers that addressed to Mr. Baldwin, but was not fortunate enough to find him at home. I trust you have by this time had a reply from him, and I feel very anxious to know its complexion. I took a copy of yours (to Mr. Baldwin), and sent it to my mother, and, besides, explained as well as I could the nature of the advice you have given. I received from her the enclosed, containing also Mr. Inskip's concurrence. I don't know whether the accounts of Messrs. Baldwin and Co. may be any way useful to you, to examine at your leisure; but I felt sorry, after you were gone, that you did not take them with you. I therefore send them, and also three letters relative to the cottage at Honington;—that from Mr. Golding (the attorney employed by the purchaser) is the one to which Mr. Inskip has alluded, which is the best reason I have for sending them, for it seems a useless intrusion to worry our friends on so hopeless a subject. The question about the *Biography* which Mr. Inskip asks will be unintelligible, with-

out my saying, that if you had been likely to be stationary and at leisure, I had an intention of asking you to become Biographer, in case you found (on examination) sufficient materials for the purpose. I have not consulted Mr. Harvey; perhaps Mr. Baldwin's reply will enable you to judge whether it will be desirable or useful. I omitted to tell you that I had written to Mr. Park for his advice and opinion, as to the propriety of parting with the half-copyrights;—and the value of them. I briefly described the circumstances in which we are placed; he returned the answer which I here send. I trouble you with all these papers not because I think them very important, but that I think you ought to know what has been done, or omitted. I am quite aware of the necessity for our (for *my*) personal exertion for our future support, and am resolved to *try* my utmost, when once clear of Shefford, and would do so, if the necessity was not so urgent; but, till we *are* clear, I cannot give proof of my sincerity. I shall wait anxiously for your next. Pray remember me kindly to Miss. Weston, and believe me,

Dear Sir, yours truly,

HANNAH BLOOMFIELD.

P. S. I think I have before informed you, that my father has repeatedly expressed a wish that

either Mr. Park or yourself would write his Biography, if it should ever be required. I asked Mr. Park, who declined it, as being already engaged in a similar employment, and recommended an application to Mr. Southey, or Mr. Rogers. We declined asking either of those gentlemen, supposing them to be so engaged in more important concerns as not to be likely to undertake it.

MR. WESTON TO MISS BLOOMFIELD.

Windsor, April 18, 1824.

DEAR MISS BLOOMFIELD,

I write in reply to yours of yesterday, rather prematurely, for the purpose of informing you that I have not yet heard from Mr. Baldwin, and that I think you would do well to call on him; and either press him to write to me, or else to inform you whether he is willing to accommodate the family, in the way I proposed, or not. It really appears to me, the only way in which any friend can render you essential service; but of course the co-operation of Messrs. Baldwin and Co. is necessary. If that can be obtained, I shall feel happy to do the best I can: I only wish to bring the matter to as early an issue as possible. In the

mean time, I am glad you have sent me the Bookseller's account. On careful examination, it seems to me that Mr. Baldwin on one side, and your friend Mr. B. on the other, have erred in nearly equal degrees.

With respect to the cottage, it is impossible to form an opinion without more information than is contained in the letters. If the title is imperfect, the purchaser will of course delay; and if urged to give up the purchase, will also, of course, require full indemnity for all the expenses he has incurred. Above all things avoid going to law. It will in my opinion be better to leave *it to the decision of your creditors*, or to the operation of time.

As to the memoir, I feel flattered by the opinion you express; but I really fear the latter events of Mr. Bloomfield's life are not of a nature to interest the public sufficiently to answer publication. However, I have no objection to examine your documents, and say what I think on the subject; and then we can talk it over. I wish you to examine the credit side of the account I have sent, carefully, so as to be satisfied that every thing is accounted for, and that I myself have committed no mistakes.

Yours, &c.

JOSEPH WESTON.

I will return the documents after more examination.

MR. WESTON TO MR. BALDWIN.

73, *Peascod-street, Windsor, April* 10, 1824.

SIR,

Some months ago I called on you, at the request of the family of the late Mr. Robert Bloomfield, for the purpose of learning the state of their accounts with your firm.

At that time, it was difficult to ascertain the general situation of their affairs, which, upon subsequent inquiry, turn out to be considerably embarrassed. As I happen to be personally acquainted with most of their creditors, I think I may have influence enough with a great majority, to induce them to accept a moderate composition in discharge of their several claims, provided any part of the Bloomfields' property, remaining in your hands, can be rendered *immediately* available to that purpose. My present object, therefore, is, to request you will be so good as to inform me, whether you are willing to advance the sum of one hundred pounds, in anticipation of the payments, which the family may expect from that

source—and if not, whether the same sum can be raised by premature sale of part of the said property, within one month from the present date. By such arrangements, I think the half-copyrights may be preserved to the family, which, being their only resource, is an object very desirable.

If it is not giving you too much trouble, I should feel obliged if you will inform me, what has been the clear total amount, which Mr. Bloomfield and his family have derived from their property in your possession, from first to last.

There is a difference of opinion on these points, between myself and other friends of the family, (who have examined your accounts) which *you* only can determine.

I take the liberty of begging an early answer, because other objects will soon require my presence in a distant part of the country. Apologising for this trouble,

I have the honour to be, Sir,
your obedient servant,

JOSEPH WESTON.

To R. Baldwin, Esq.
London.

MR. BALDWIN TO MR. WESTON.

London, April 20, 1824.

SIR,

I am sorry that overwhelming calls upon my time have prevented me from earlier replying to your letter, which, however, was left here only a few days ago. * * * *

In January last we paid Mrs. Bloomfield fifty pounds on account, though the balance due to us is not even yet liquidated by the sale; and consequently nothing more can be expected during the present year. I should be very sorry that any sacrifice were made of the existing property for the sake of raising a given sum for the creditors; and by law, the creditors have no demand on the estate, till a year has expired after the decease of the author. Even when that time should arrive, they would not be able very well to avail themselves of it; because, until our debt is fully liquidated, we could withhold it from them. Under these circumstances, I should think they would readily accept of a reasonable composition; and we would gladly promote such a result, by at once giving our promissory note at twelve months for one hundred pounds on the credit of the returns

forthcoming. If you can persuade them to do this, no sacrifice would be made; but the family must be prepared to wait a considerable time, before any thing more would accrue to them.

I remain, Sir,

Yours, &c.

ROBERT BALDWIN.

MISS BLOOMFIELD TO MR. C. BLOOMFIELD.

(Extract.)

24, *Providence Row, June* 23.

MY DEAR CHARLES,

You are aware, from my former letters, that Messrs. Baldwin and Co. were so kind as to advance a bill for one hundred pounds at twelve months, to enable us to come to some settlement with our creditors, and that Mr. Weston induced them to accept a composition of seven shillings in the pound *,

* The Editor of this work, having been generally blamed, (as a friend of the family) for not advising them to remove their little property to London for sale, begs leave to assign the following reasons for the advice which he gave:—

1st, The inconsiderable value of the whole property, which,

promising to divide amongst them the proceeds from the sale of the cottage at Honington, though the delay which had hitherto existed made this a forlorn hope. This arrangement relieved us from some anxiety for our personal safety; and we sold our little property (books and furniture), to enable us to come to London to seek our living. Still, we did not consider ourselves out of *debt;* and the settlement for the cottage being still delayed, we left Shefford with a determination to pay them whenever it might be in our power, and a

according to the best estimates, did not exceed seventy pounds, including every thing.

2d, The difficulty of proving in London that the articles were genuine, i. e. that they were actually the property of the deceased.

3d, The general *uncertainty* of sales in London, and the *certain* expense of conveyance thither.

4th, The propriety of convincing the creditors (who had agreed, conditionally, to take a moderate composition) that the whole property was really offered for sale.

5th, To afford the creditors themselves an opportunity of preventing any article from being sold for less than its value.

6th, The inconvenience it would have been to the Editor to superintend the sale in London; and at the same time arrange the writings of the deceased, and settle his affairs in the country.

7th, His reliance on public sympathy and benevolence to supply for the family the imperfections of his own arrangements.

hope that it might be *soon*. This you *already* know; and I have now the pleasure of informing you, that we have obtained seventy pounds for the cottage, and Mr. Weston sent it to Shefford yesterday, making up the whole amount from the produce of our sale; so that we are now completely free from debt, and have somewhere about forty pounds to divide amongst five of us for two years. But who of our family does not agree with Mr. Weston, that the unspotted character which our dear father maintained should remain unblemished by his family? which could not have been, had we suffered his creditors to lose any part of their debts while it was *possible* for us to pay them. Let me hear from you soon.

Your affectionate sister,

HANNAH BLOOMFIELD.

P. S. Our friends, or rather the friends of our father, have instituted a subscription for our benefit, which Mr. Weston thinks has commenced auspiciously; but you must be aware that this is a very *uncertain resource*; but be its produce what it may, I hope, with the aid of our own exertions, we shall make it do.

MR. WESTON TO MR. G. BLOOMFIELD.

Shefford, June 5, 1824.

SIR,

It was the wish of your late brother, Mr. Robert Bloomfield, my much lamented friend, that I should prepare the materials for a sketch or memoir of his life, should such be thought useful, and publish such parts of his correspondence and other papers as I might deem fit for the purpose. These, with a preface, and a few tributary verses to his memory, will compose two moderate-sized volumes, and will serve to complete what may properly be called his works. They have received the approbation of Mr. Park, and I shall now send them to the booksellers for theirs. In the preface I have thought it my duty to notice the cowardly attack made on your brother's character and writings, in the Monthly Magazine for September 1823, and have little doubt of making the libeller either look very silly or retract his slander. I wish, however, to march on solid ground; and the only tender place I as yet apprehend, is contained in that sentence of Robert's letter to you, where he says—"I took the manuscript of the Farmer's Boy to your *Magazine Man*," without saying who

this man was. If your memory serves, I will thank you to inform me what Magazine it was to which your brother alludes, and who was at that time the editor of it; and whether you have any reason for thinking that the person who wrote the libel above alluded to can possibly be the same; or if you are *quite sure* it must be some other person; for if the latter be the case, I have other evidence to prove that nearly the whole is a collection of wilful misrepresentations, the exposure of which may tend to place the reputation of your brother, and that of his traducer, in their proper light.

It is my present intention to blend the account of your brother's early life, published in the stereotype edition, with certain historical memoranda which he has left in considerable abundance, together with his correspondence, and such authentic anecdotes as I can collect among his friends and acquaintance, into a Biographical Sketch, and perhaps leave the composition and style to some abler pen. I hope, however, in my ministerial office to do impartial justice to a man whose talents I admired, whose virtues I venerate, and whose untimely death I shall always deplore. I foresee, however, that it must be a cloudy concern—perhaps you will allow me to enliven the detail now and then with an extract from your poetry, which I think is often excellent, and abounds in your

letters. I beg to add, that any anecdotes or other communications from you will always be received with thankfulness. I shall remain here until the 12th, but a letter at any time addressed for me to Mr. Bristow, Park-street, Windsor, will be sure to reach me safely.

I remain, sir,

Your humble servant,

JOSEPH WESTON.

It is very extraordinary that we can get no intelligence either from Mr. Lockwood or Mr. Wayman as to the cottage business. It would save great trouble and expense if they would conclude it while I am here, having induced the creditors to accept a moderate composition, under the promise that the proceeds of this estate should be added—for the performance of which I consider my honour and credit both pledged. At any rate I should like to know how the matter stands, and if it is not giving you too much trouble, should feel much obliged if you would urge Mr. Lockwood to send such information.

MY DEAR UNCLE,

This little space will serve to tell you we are all well, and that is as much as I have to say now, except that we hope *you* are.

Your affectionate niece,
HANNAH BLOOMFIELD.

MR. GEORGE BLOOMFIELD TO MR. WESTON.

Bury St. Edmunds, June 9, 1824.

SIR,

I beg leave to say I received your letter, dated Shefford, June 5th. The magazine man mentioned by my brother Robert, was Mr. W. Bent, successor to S. A. Cumberlege, at the King's Arms, Paternoster-row, London; but who was the editor of the magazine, I am ignorant. Mr. Bent was the publisher. His was the Universal Magazine; I read it more than twenty years. Mr. Bent kept the MS. a week or two, and sent it back to my brother by a grave book-faced looking man, who said it did not suit Mr. Bent, &c. My brother offered it to Mr. Lane, the great wholesale novel manufacturer. He returned it almost immediately with a note of two lines, to say, it was not in his line. My brother afterwards left it with Mr. Dilly, in the Poultry. Mr. Dilly, when my brother afterwards called for the MS. said,

it wanted revisal, &c. My brother then sent it to me here, at Bury, and it was on my own petition, without my brother's knowledge, that Mr. Lofft took it under his patronage. But I have lived near seventy years in the world, and have seen enough of mankind to know, that the wretch who has once vouched a falsehood, will invent fifty more to make it good. Still, however, Mr. Lofft * is yet living, and will certainly prove he had no letter of recommendation. But then the calumniator may still say he gave my brother such letter. Should he do this—though I would stake my salvation on its being false—how could it be disproved? The coward staid till the death of poor Robert ere he dared make his attack. O, sir, if you could conceive how it hurt my mind when I read the statement in the Monthly Magazine for September, 1823! . . . . . .

The tale is told as if my brother's misfortunes arose from his talents—as if his success had done no good—C. Bloomfield, Esq. did not know there was such a man as me in existence till Robert's success brought me to his knowledge on Robert's account—for whose sake he, Mr. B., took me and mine into his protection. His great benevolence

* The account of this gentleman's death had not *then* arrived.

and charity have conferred favours on me it would fill a sheet to detail, and at this moment his bounty nearly feeds me; but for Robert's success I should have been unknown to this gentleman, and, consequently, must have wanted bread, or have been in a workhouse. And poor brother Isaac, who was in his youth a gay lad, and on a footing with the young farmers of the village, must, when weighed down with a family of nine children, have trembled at a vestry to those he once deemed his equals. But Robert took him up, and was his true friend—took him and his family to London, and placed them in a shop. The scheme failed—he sent them down again—gave them the rent in the cottage for twenty years, clothed the boys, &c. The rent alone must have been sixty pounds. My brother Nat, I doubt not, had often his assistance. Nat had thirteen or fourteen children. All the comforts myself and brothers enjoyed, evidently sprung from the success of Robert. This sneaking assassin without a name, who wrote the article for the Monthly Magazine for September, 1823, keeps all this positive good—these real blessings out of sight—and tells us how happy Robert might have been had he continued to be a journeyman shoemaker. Even here he acts with cruel duplicity. He does not tell his readers that Robert was for the last

twenty years seldom capable of bodily labour. He leaves the reader to think he was a man capable of hard exertion—whereas, the reverse was the case; the suppression of truth is, in this case, as much a calumny as the fabrication of falsehood.

While his resources lasted, Robert was always ready to *prove by his conduct* that he acted to others as he would have wished them to have acted towards him had *they* been in his place and he in theirs. Here it may be objected, how came he to get into debt? He certainly, while his income was good, had not that cold, prudential caution which men of the world possess. I am willing to admit with that calumniator, his ambition was disappointed. It would have been his ambition to keep Isaac's family from the parish; to keep his brother Nat from trouble, &c. &c. This he could not do. But to read the article in the Monthly Magazine, the reader might be led to think that he was ambitious of aping the man of "*pecuniary independence, &c.*"

The only luxury I ever knew him indulge in, was a Cockney garden; and here he was more to be pitied than blamed. He staid some time after he came into money in his old lodgings in Mulberry-court, till he was literally hunted out of it. Persons of consideration, who came in great numbers to see him, complained of the place being disagreeable. Mr. Peter Gedge, the printer, called

on him—gave him half-a-guinea, and advised him to get into a better situation. Robert then hired a respectable lodging in Short-street, Moorfields. His landlord put the key under the door in the night, and left Robert to pay 9*l.* rent to the proprietor of the house, or lose his goods. He then hired a very small house near the Shepherd and Shepherdess, in the City Road. Here he had, what was certainly, a large Cockney garden! When his income became reduced, he retired to Shefford, where his rent, &c. was comparatively small. He never kept a servant, or a horse, as many a one would have done. His whole conduct in prosperity proved his fraternal love, his filial affection, and his readiness to assist to the utmost of his power those who applied to him. Those who knew him best will wonder how a man so inoffensive and unobtrusive can be charged with ambition. But the writer of the article above alluded to, says by *inference*, that the *poor* man of talents should not dare to enter the fields of literature, but leave them to the men of "*pecuniary independence.*"

I hope, sir, you will not tire in the glorious work you have begun. You cannot please every body—you cannot produce a perfect book:

> "Whoever thinks a faultless piece to see,
> Thinks what ne'er was, nor is, nor e'er shall be."

But to endeavour to rescue the character of him who is not here to defend himself, is, I repeat it, a glorious task, and all the wise and good will applaud the design, whatever impediments the interested and the wicked, may throw in your way.

Your humble servant,

G. BLOOMFIELD.

To Mr. Weston,
Shefford.

MR. WESTON TO MR. GEORGE BLOOMFIELD.

21, *Providence-row, Finsbury-square,*
London, June 20, 1821.

SIR,

I shall feel obliged if you will return a copy of the letter I wrote to you about June 5th, as I shall perhaps find occasion to print it, together with your excellent reply.

At the same time, please to inform me in plain, distinct terms, whether you ever heard your brother Robert express any resentment against the editor of the Monthly Magazine, for having, as that editor affirms, advised him (Robert) "to stick to his last;" or did you ever hear him allude to

such an admonition, as having been used by the said editor.

Sir, your obedient servant,

JOSEPH WESTON.

Mr. George Bloomfield,
Bury.

MR. GEORGE BLOOMFIELD TO MR. WESTON.

(Extract.)

Bury St. Edmunds, June 26, 1824.

SIR,

I thank you for the kind letter I received, dated the 20th. When I wrote to you last, I feared lest I should tire you with my prolixity, yet I left much unsaid that I think I had a right to state, as my dear brother's character is now to be brought forward before the dread tribunal of his fellow mortals.

I confined myself in my last to observations which appeared in the article in the Monthly Magazine, for September, 1823; and I wish farther to observe, that whoever reads it would be led to think my brother was a boorish, headstrong fellow—whereas those who knew him in his youth can witness to his modest unassuming manners;

and I solemnly declare, as I hope for mercy at the great day, I never heard of the tale about "sticking to his last" till I read it in the Monthly Magazine. In the days—the happy days that Robert and I spent in free converse, it is impossible for him not, at some time, to have mentioned it.

Yours, &c.

G. BLOOMFIELD.

Mr. Weston,
London.

MR. WESTON TO MR. INSKIP.

(Copy.)

SIR,

As the old and intimate friend of the late Robert Bloomfield, the poet, I beg to ask you whether, during your long and intimate acquaintance, you ever heard him say

Firstly. That he actually took his manuscript of the Farmer's Boy to the editor of the Monthly Magazine.

2ndly. That said editor advised him not to waste his time in writing poetry.

3rdly. That said editor advised him to consult Mr. Capel Lofft, and gave him a letter of introduction to that gentleman.

4thly. That said editor advised him "to stick to his last, &c." which last phrase he, Mr. Robert Bloomfield, is accused of having often "*quoted with indignation in the heyday of his subsequent popularity.*"

Did you, sir, ever hear him mention these circumstances, or express any resentful feeling at the alleged insult?

A short and early reply in very plain terms will oblige, &c.

JOSEPH WESTON.

Mr. T. Inskip,
Shefford.

A similar copy sent to Mr. Park, at Hampstead.

MR. PARK TO MR. WESTON.

Hampstead, June 23, 1824.

SIR,

It was out of my power to answer your letter of yesterday, so promptly as you desired, in consequence of being away from home. At the distance of twenty-four years, I should hesitate to speak very positively as to matters of conversation; but I am relieved from this difficulty by a memorandum made at the time, in my own copy of the

second edition of the Farmer's Boy, in 1800, which I will here transcribe.

" This poem was first offered to Bent, in Paternoster-row, with a request to know his opinion of its deserts: but this he declined, in a short note, which was returned to Mr. B. in the course of a week, along with his MS. Dilly was next applied to, who refused to have any concern in publishing it, but recommended the slighted author to take his production to Phillips, who probably might print it in the Monthly Magazine. But as the poet foresaw that in case it was accepted for insertion he should have to pay five or six shillings for obtaining a copy to send to his mother, which was his prime object, he preferred sending the MS. for her inspection to his brother at Bury, who fortunately got it conveyed to the eye of Mr. Lofft. Mr. L. was delighted with its merits, communicated it to Mr. Hill, and it was immediately recommended to Hood for publication."

With the above memorandum I will extract the following note:

" To Mr. Lofft's protection and encouragement it was primarily owing that a production so morally and poetically estimable as the Farmer's Boy has struggled into day; but to the modest author's faithfulness of delineation, felicity of diction,

purity of sentiment, and refined simplicity of taste, it will stand indebted for 'aye-enduring fame.'"

I had not heard of Mr. Lofft's decease till your announcement of it, and I grieve to hear of it from a variety of considerations. Eight of his letters to me, which chiefly have relation to his poetical protégé, I have looked out, and when occasion serves they shall be placed in your hands. I do not remember to have seen the verses entitled PERPLEXITY, or the essay occasioned by some insurrection in America.

The subscription papers shall be circulated where I can anticipate any success.

I cannot decidedly say whether the MS. of the Farmer's Boy was ever taken to the editor of the Monthly Magazine; but I should think that some of the letters which passed between his brothers and himself (a transcript of which I transmitted, with his letters to me) would be likely to settle the question. *This* I can decidedly say, that I never heard him repeat the sarcasm ascribed to that editor, nor did I ever know him give vent to any resentful feeling against him or any other person. Indeed I verily believe that he had too catholic a benevolence for human kind to allow himself to foster an emotion of resentment toward any human being; and when he did speak of his

early struggles, he spoke of them with much complacency. Perhaps the rustic anathema, in his "Neighbourly* Resolution," may comprise the amount of his indignant feelings, while in his "First View of the Sea" he breathes a christian supplication for that wisdom which would "teach him to forgive." That we may all be taught to do so, is the hearty prayer of yours,

With much sincerity,

THOMAS PARK.

MR. INSKIP TO MR. WESTON.

Shefford, June 25, 1824.

DEAR SIR,

On taxing my recollection respecting the editor of the Monthly Magazine, I have no reason to believe that Mr. Bloomfield was ever personally known to him, because in my long acquaintance with Mr. Bloomfield, and my frequent conversations on the fortunes of the Farmer's Boy, I must have been informed of it; moreover, I recollect *well* talking to Mr. B. on the merits of the Monthly Magazine, which he always highly extolled, and lamented that his poverty would not allow him to

* "May shadeless labour and sour ale," &c.

spare half-a-crown a month to take it in, and learn thereby how the literary world was going on. This does not in the least savour of a hostile feeling on the part of Bloomfield.

Believe me, truly yours,
T. I.

FROM A LADY.

June 28, 1824.

MY DEAR MISS BLOOMFIELD,

I am almost sorry to hear of your intending to publish his (Mr. B.'s) remains in poetry and prose so soon. I hope you will consult some of your father's most judicious and experienced friends, before you take so important a step. Allow me to suggest, that all the benefit that can be derived from your father's talents and fame, is now at stake; and that the means in your hands should be carefully used, lest, by grasping at too much, all should be lost!—or at least, much be risked, which by a little caution and patience might be rendered more productive. Permit me to call to your mind that some liberal and handsome gifts have recently been made at your sale—that papers are now before the public for raising a subscription for your family:—and if, at the same

time, you publish the "Remains" (whether by subscription or not, I cannot tell; but it comes to the same thing), and hold out an expectation that the life of your father and his correspondence is to follow, I fear you may alarm the public, and prevent even your well-wishers from coming forward in the way they might do, if fewer claims were made, and things allowed to succeed each other at intervals. People may part with their money gradually, by little and little; but when various proposals are made at the same time, it distracts the mind, and if all cannot be complied with, (which is hardly to be expected), a doubt may arise which way to give aid, and perhaps at last nothing be done. Forgive my plainness, and place it to the score of friendship, where indeed it deserves to be.

Your sincere friend.

MISS BLOOMFIELD IN REPLY.

MADAM,

I have been so much employed by Mr. Weston during the last week in making extracts from letters and writing out copy for the press, that I fear I have trangressed the rules of strict pro-

priety in having omitted to reply to your kind letter. Mr. Weston, the friend who has taken the trouble to manage our concerns, has consulted some of my father's best and oldest friends as to the merits of the work to be published. It has met with their approbation, and will make its appearance now in a few days, and I trust will rather contribute to establish my dear father's fame than to diminish it.

It was the opinion of our friends near Shefford, that we ought to avail ourselves of the sympathy which our misfortunes had excited as soon as we decently could, particularly as the first fruits arising from this resource cannot reach us under fourteen or fifteen months, unless we had consented to sacrifice a great part of the advantage (which may arise from the work being sold for our exclusive benefit) for the sake of raising a present supply. I am at a loss to know what are the liberal and handsome gifts to which you have alluded, as having been made at our sale. A gentleman, whom it would perhaps be improper to name, was so kind as to purchase the oak table, which sold for 13*l.*, and presented it as an heir loom to the family. Another gentleman purchased a pewter dish for 1*l.* 1*s.*, which he also presented. Dr. Drake sent spontaneously a subscription raised among his friends at Hadleigh, amounting to

13*l.* 2*s.* 6*d.*, besides which I do not remember any other favour except the drawings which you, madam, was so kind as to purchase so much above their value. Perhaps you will more readily believe me on this point, when I inform you, that the clear proceeds of our sale amounted only to 82*l.*; and that when we had paid our creditors and our expenses to London, we had about 40*l.* left to divide amongst five of us, to supply our expenditure for about two years, as we must wait full that time before our bookseller's account becomes reproductive.

The subscription has been managed by Mr. Rogers, Mr. Park, and Mr. Weston, who have caused circulars to be distributed amongst our friends in all parts of the country, and I am sure it would be much regretted by those gentlemen if this has been done in any way unpleasant to our friends.

When I mentioned to Mr. Weston what you have observed about the variety of the modes employed to interest the public in our behalf, he replied,—some will assist from one motive and some from another; but reflecting minds will in general feel more disposed to help you in proportion as they observe in you a willingness to help yourselves, and to make the most of the little property which is still in your possession.

My father's manuscripts were bought in at the sale by ourselves, lest a dispute should arise as to the right of publishing them.

P. S. I have taken the liberty of reading your letter, and this answer of mine to Mr. Weston. He says it will be of infinite importance to us to have extracts from them, published in the forthcoming work. The reason he assigns is, that others may be influenced by the same opinions which you have expressed, and it is of consequence to us that our friends should not remain under erroneous impressions.

Mr. Weston has transcribed that part of yours which he thinks available, and marked the corresponding part of mine. If you are so kind as to comply, I shall feel obliged by an immediate answer, it being the only thing for which we shall have to wait.

Yours, &c.

H. BLOOMFIELD.

Providence Row, July 5, 1824.

TO THE READER.

I have thus far discharged the duty imposed on me with care and fidelity. I trust that good nature and good sense will look on the per-

formance with an indulgent eye, not on *my* account, but for the sake of the injured and the destitute. It has been compiled in haste, under adverse circumstances (obvious to reflecting minds), from papers and memoranda left in much confusion or widely scattered; some errors may therefore have escaped unobserved.

A few of the fragments now offered to the public have appeared before in newspapers or other periodicals; but as they had a very limited circulation, they must be quite new to readers in general, and I trust will gratify the public, and serve the distressed family.

I have still withheld a few, under the hope that when I obtain possession of the promised letters addressed to his Grace the Duke of Grafton, to Mrs. Palmer, Mr. Capel Lofft, and a few more of our author's best and earliest friends, I may find more correct copies of them, in which case they will appear in the "Memoir and Correspondence."

Those friends of Mr. Bloomfield, who have preserved his original letters, will confer a favour on the editor, and render great service to the family, by sending them as soon as possible to Miss Bloomfield, No. 12, Providence-row, Finsbury-square, London.

I beg leave on my own part and on the part of Mr. Bloomfield's family, to return my grateful thanks

to those who have in any way co-operated in this pleasing duty. To myself, however, belongs the sole responsibility for whatever faults may have been committed.

I am afraid many will think that in making this selection, I have used my opportunities with too liberal a hand, for which I can only repeat an excuse I have made to Mr. Park, that my respect for Mr. Bloomfield's genius leads me to venerate, not only all he has written, but all he has noticed.

I have thus far endeavoured to do justice to his writings, and to gratify the taste of his friends; and I close my task with the cheering assurance—that a grateful and generous nation will very soon do justice to his memory.

Thousands of persons in affluence, who have derived from his poems many of their purest gratifications, would, I assure myself, esteem it a reproach to the age—should his family languish in penury after all their previous misfortunes.

JOSEPH WESTON,

London, July 7, 1824.

THE END.

LONDON:

PRINTED BY THOMAS DAVISON, WHITEFRIARS.

00094593

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 06 February, 2016